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THE ISLAND PRINCESS.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLD AND NEW WORLD.

BY EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Lost Heiress," "The Deserted Wife," "The Missing Bride," "Retribution," etc.

CHAPTER VI.

THE ARRAIGNMENT.

She stood before the crowded court,
Forlorn—but oh! how fair!
Though many a beauty graced the hall,
To me, the loveliest there.

Ah! how I wished some angel then
His pitying wing would spread,
To shelter from the scorn of men
That fair, defenceless head."

MRS. TORNE HOLMES.

On entering the thronged room a group, to the left of the door, forced itself upon Lord Montressor's notice. It consisted of Victoire L'Orient, the little old French woman, and the Abbe. The woman recognized Estelle, and pressed forward, exclaiming vindictively—

"Ah, good! So that you, Madame—verily! Your most obedient, Madame," etc. etc. Until, at length, without looking at her, Lord Montressor just put out his arm and brushed the troublesome reptile from his lady's path, and led her on to the same secluded seat she had daily occupied since her attendance at court. They had not been seated more than five minutes before they were joined by Lord Dazzleright, who came hurriedly to announce that there would be no more delay than was necessary to arrange preliminaries, and that his client would be almost immediately placed at the bar. And then he hastened away again to attend to some business connected with the approaching trial.

Estelle closed her eyes and sank back in her chair. It had come, then! it had surely come. At the same bar at which within a fortnight past she had seen so many stand to answer to the charge of guilt, and from which she had seen so many sent to exile, to imprisonment, or to death, she also must stand to answer to the charge of a crime, for which, should she be convicted, she also, even *she*, the delicate, sensitive, refined child of wealth, luxury, and high rank, would be sentenced ——— here again, the haunting vision of the convict transport-packet and the penal colony, with their brutalized or demonized crew, and all their loathsome and revolting horrors, swam darkly in upon her brain.

"My God! my God! have mercy and let me die!" escaped in stifled tones from her ashey lips.

"Estelle! my Estelle! be calm, be strong, be hopeful! See, they are about to call you! Call *thou* on Him who once stood, as you are now about to stand, before man's uncertain tribunal, to be judged by man's often erring wisdom. Call thou on Him!" said Lord Montressor, earnestly, as he arose, took her hand, drew her arm within his own, and attended by Mr. Oldfield, and followed by the eyes of all the people that thronged to suffocation the court room, led her up to the bar, set a chair, seated her there, and placed himself beside her. The aged minister stood on the other side; he stooped and whispered—

"When you rise, my child, do not wait for the order of the court, but unveil at once; the innocent need not conceal her brow of truth."

The indictment was then read, and the accused was ordered to rise and hold up her hand.

Estelle arose, and Lord Montressor reverentially drew aside her veil, revealing her pale, despairing, but most beautiful face! The crowd was behind her. Thus, fortunately, she had only to confront the bench. The Judge bent forward and looked with interest into the grief-stricken, but lovely countenance thus unveiled before him. Under his scrutiny, her eyes sank to the floor, and her color rose, crimsoning her cheek even to her temples, and then receding left her paler than before. All this passed in an instant. And then—

"Prisoner, you have heard the indictment against you read. Are you guilty or not guilty of the crime laid to your charge?" asked the Judge.

"Not guilty in intention, my lord," answered the low, thrilling voice of the accused.

"You may resume your seat."

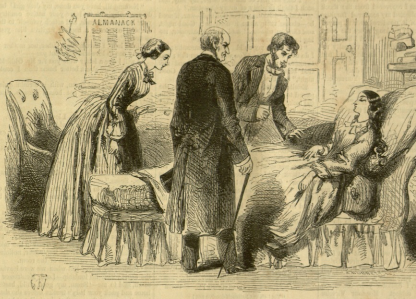
Lord Montressor, with a deferential tenderness that never failed or faltered, handed her back to her chair, and took his stand on her right hand as before.

And so perfect was the silence among the eager, attentive crowd, that not only the questions of the Judge, but every syllable of her low-toned reply was distinctly heard in every part of the court room.

The multitude had now pressed as near as was permitted to the bench, and many on either side were in a line of vision with the accused. And among them were many of her old associates, now gazing at her in pitiless curiosity! Fain would she have intervened the friendly black lace veil again between her face and the eyes of the assembly, though in respect to her friends' opinions she abstained from the self-indulgence; but oh! those eyes! those cruel eyes! she felt them like a forest of levelled bayonets, pointed towards her—impaling her!

The counsel for the crown arose, and amid the profound silence of the court, opened the prosecution. I cannot in my limited space give a just idea of the logic, eloquence and power of this preliminary speech.

It became his painful duty, he said, to prosecute one of the most extraordinary cases that the annals of English crime had ever recorded before an English tribunal. The prisoner at the bar was known—either personally, or by fame, to most persons there present. She had been a lady by birth, wealth and education, holding position among the highest in the realm; a lady distinguished for rank and fortune, celebrated for her exceeding beauty and accomplished genius; *such she had been*. Now, alas! she was no less distinguished for her discovered depravity, daring and duplicity! They knew that she had been successful in fashionable, aristocratic, and even in royal circles; he would now show that she had until recently been equally successful in her course of concealed guilt. He would give a synopsis of her career, stating facts that he should prove by competent witnesses present in this court. He should commence with her school life, showing the gentlemen of the jury the precocious depravity with which at the early age of fourteen she had deceived her fond, indulgent parents, deluded her excellent teacher, and ensnared a young gentleman into a secret marriage, soon as lightly broken as it had been made; the wantonness with which she had abandoned her youthful bridegroom, driving him to despair and desperation, that soon ended in the wreck of his fortune and character; the duplicity with which through ten long years she had concealed the fact of her first marriage from her parents and friends; and the wickedness with which she had, just one month since, entrapped the heart and hand of a noble lord here present, and who was the second victim of this modern Messalina!



ESTELLE IN THE SHERIFF'S ROOM AFTER THE VERDICT.

At this degrading peroration, the blood rushed to Lord Montressor's brow—he started forward with a flashing eye and a raised hand—but, then, recollecting himself and his surroundings, he made a powerful effort, controlled himself, and with the air of a man who bides his time, retreated to his stand.

Estelle, a novice to the forms and usages of courts of law, heard all the enormous charges, the atrocious wickedness officially imputed to her by the prosecutor, and sat, with pallid features and fixed stare, like a woman appalled to marble!

Lord Dazzleright stooped and spoke to her.

"You should know, Lady Montressor, that this is merely an *official* tirade, a professional affair—it means nothing, makes no impression. The Judge don't believe him, the jury don't believe him, he don't believe himself. He is only repeating the prosecutor's usual raw head and bloody bones formula of—

'Fe, faw, fum—I smell the blood of an Englishman.

No more than just that."

But Estelle did not understand nor hear, nor ever once withdraw her stony gaze, that seemed caught up and spell-bound to the face of her terrible accuser. At length, however, the dreadful voice ceased to declaim, and gave the counsel for the defence an opportunity of answering. But as Lord Dazzleright declined replying, for the present reserving his defence, the prosecutor proceeded to call the witnesses for the crown.

It would be tedious to recapitulate the testimony, which the reader has already heard given at the investigation before the magistrate. The same witnesses, namely: Madame Gabrielle L'Orient and the Abbe Peire Le Roux, were successively called, and testified to the same fact, to wit: that of the marriage that had been performed between Victoire L'Orient and Estelle Morelle at the church of St. Etienne, Paris, on the thirteenth day of November, eighteen hundred and ——. They also identified the prisoner at the bar and Victoire L'Orient there present as the contracting parties in that ceremony. These witnesses were in turn subjected to a severe cross-examination by Lord Dazzleright, but without effect. The duplicity and cunning of the little old Frenchwoman was at least a match for the legal acumen of the best lawyer in the three kingdoms. A host of witnesses were present ready to testify to the well known fact of the so-called "felonious" marriage rites that had been celebrated on the first day of May last, at the parish church of Hyde, in the county of Devon, between Estelle, wife of Victoire L'Orient, and George Charles, Lord Viscount Montressor. But a few of these were needed to establish this point. And here the prosecuting attorney rested his case. Lord Dazzleright arose for the defence.

All eyes were turned upon him—he was a man of distinguished presence, as well as of brilliant genius. Amid the deepest silence, and the profoundest attention, he commenced his speech.

"My Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury:—The charge made against my client, by the learned counsel for the crown,—imposing as it seems, and sustained as it is, by competent witnesses,—is really so unsubstantial, as to be easily overthrown, by reference to a single fact,—as it is no doubt *already* invalided in the estimation of your lordship, of the jury, and of all within the sound of my voice, by the simple *recollection* of that fact;—to wit: that the statute laws of France as well as those of England, regard a minor of fourteen years of age as an *infant* in the law, and incapable of contracting marriage without the knowledge and consent of his or her parents or guardians. Therefore, the quasi marriage ceremony celebrated between the man Victoire L'Orient and the infant Estelle Morelle, in the Catholic chapel of St. Etienne, Paris, on the thirteenth day of November, eighteen hundred and —— *was*, and *is*, completely invalid and of none effect, and could therefore form no obstacle to the nuptials solemnized between Estelle Morelle and the Lord Viscount Montressor at the parish church of Hyde on the first of May ultimo. This fact is so well understood by all here present, that I need not dwell upon the point any longer than to remind your lordship and the jury that this *is, of itself*, all-sufficient for the *legal* acquittal of my client.

"But, my lord and gentlemen, I wish to be understood as standing here, *not only* in the character of an advocate of a client,—whom I consider as having been presented and indicted upon intenable grounds, and whom I feel assured stands already fully acquitted before you,—*but also* as the champion of a deeply injured and most unhappy, though most estimable lady, whose high moral and intellectual excellencies can only be equalled in degree by her cruel wrongs and great sufferings,—a lady whose hand and fortune, while yet she was an infant, became the objects of a foul conspiracy, and whose fair name is now the target of the sharpest arrows of calumny. My lord and gentlemen, the proved invalidity of that first quassi marriage suffices to clear my client before the *court*. It is, therefore, to acquit her before the *tribunal of public opinion*, that I stand here and proceed to make a statement of facts, every one of which I pledge myself to establish by witnesses of unquestionable probity."

Here the learned advocate commenced and gave in detail the sorrowful history of Estelle's school life as it is already known to the reader. His earnestness, his eloquence and graphic delineation of the wrongs and sufferings of the beautiful woman who sat there waiting her doom, in death-like stillness,—in turn flushed every cheek with indignation, or filled every eye with tears. In the course of his speech he said—in answer to the false and totally unfounded assumptions of the prosecuting attorney, and to silence forever those who from any cause might be disposed to cavil,—he should state and prove, that, illegal as was that quasi marriage, it had been entered upon in perfectly good faith by his client. She supposed it valid and binding; infant as she was, she believed herself a wife. And most wretched as that false marriage proved, and deeply repented as it was, *she* had remained, in every respect scrupulously faithful to its supposed obligations. Yes, faithful not only for the ten months that she lived and suffered under the cruel despotism of her *soi disant* husband, but after that,—when the penal laws of France had sent him a convict to Algiers, for the ten years of separation, and the two years of supposed widowhood! She had borne her burden *alone*, until in due course of time, her betrothal to a certain noble peer, here present, made it right and proper that she should confide to him the fact of the previous union, then supposed to be broken by death.

I have thus given but a skeleton of Lord Dazzleright's address—would I could infuse into it the fullness, force and vitality of the original.

He finished amid a breathless silence, and proceeded to call his witnesses.. They were not many, but had been selected with the greatest care. The advocate had been very busy during the interval of the past month, and had spared neither time, labor nor expense, in collecting and consolidating testimony. He had drawn from his client's native county, witnesses of the very highest standing, to give testimony upon the exemplary piety of her life and manners; and he had dispatched a confidential agent to the chief of Police at Paris, to procure his assistance in hunting up the employees who had been in the service of Madame L'Orient, at the time of the disgraceful breaking up of her "Pensionat," and in selecting such as were most competent to give evidence in this case. These were now in court, and were successively called to the stand. Their united testimony harmonized perfectly, and corroborated the statements of the advocate. They were in turn severely cross-examined by the king's counsel; but the more their testimony was tried the stronger it was proved. The advocate here rested the defence.

The Judge then arose to review the case, sum up the evidence, and charge the jury.

His lordship's exposition of the law and the testimony, in his instructions, might be considered a virtual acquittal of the prisoner. It was like the usual charges of Sir James Allan Parke—short, clear and pointed.

"Gentlemen of the Jury, you have heard the charge upon which the prisoner at the bar stands arraigned, and which has been clearly set forth by the counsel for the crown, and well sustained by the witnesses he has produced. You have also heard how that charge has been met and answered by the counsel for the prisoner. The fact of two marriages having taken place under the circumstances set forth, is fully established by testimony. The learned advocate for the accused rests his defence upon the alleged invalidity of the first marriage. Now, upon the validity or invalidity of that marriage, this court has no authority to pronounce judgment; the adjudication of such matters belongs, exclusively, to the Spiritual Court of Arches. If the first marriage was invalid, it would form no obstacle to the second marriage, which in such case would not be illegal. And if, on the other hand, the first marriage was perfectly valid, the second marriage would be illegal; but not necessarily *felonious*. Intention is the soul of crime. From the evidence before you, if you find that the prisoner at the bar, upon the occasion of solemnizing marriage with Lord Montressor, knew, or had good and sufficient cause to believe that she had already a husband living—it will be your duty to convict her. If, on the other hand, you find that she knew or had good and sufficient reason to believe herself legally free to contract the said marriage, it becomes your duty to acquit her. To this single point is drawn the question. You are to judge upon it, and render your verdict accordingly."

The Judge ceased and resumed his seat.

The jury retired under the conduct of the sheriff's officer, to another room to deliberate.

Then the spell of breathless silence that had bound the spectators was dissolved. They breathed and spoke—a buzz of voices filled the room.

As for Estelle, she changed not from the frozen, stony look into which she had been at first appalled by the official abuse of the crown's counsel.

Lord Montressor stooped and whispered to her,—

"My own Estelle, courage! courage for a few moments longer! and then all will be over; all will be well! You are already more than acquitted, you are justified, you are vindicated."

"Oh! I know, I know all," replied a sepulchral voice, that Lord Montressor scarcely recognized as belonging to his silver-tongued Estelle.

In a moment, silence fell again like death upon the court room. It was produced by the opening of a door and the appearance of the bailiff, ushering in the jury. They advanced to their place. The foreman stood before the Judge. Not a breath was drawn, scarcely a pulse beat in that crowded court room for the space of a minute, during which the Judge inquired:

"Gentlemen of the jury, have you agreed upon your verdict?"

"We have, my lord," answered the foreman.

"What say you then, is the prisoner at the bar guilty or not guilty?"

"NOT GUILTY, my lord."

"Lady Montressor is discharged from custody," said the Judge.

A low, deep murmur of satisfaction ran through the crowd. The old minister seized the hand of his protege and burst into tears of joy. Lord Montressor grasped that of Lord Dazzleright in warm acknowledgment of his services and congratulation of his success, and then instantly turned to his bride.

His attention was too late—she had fainted on the arm of the old clergyman—she who had firmly borne up under the horrors of the past month, had now succumbed and sunk, and lay like a statue fallen from its pedestal.

"Lady Montressor is discharged from custody," repeated the clerk of the court, somewhat impatiently.

She looked indeed as though she were discharged not only from the court, but from the earth—so still, so white, so lifeless!

"Raise her in your arms, Montressor—take her into the sheriff's room. I will show you the way," said Lord Dazzleright, bending anxiously over her fainting form.

At this moment, also, Susan Copsewood, her maid, who had been somewhere among the spectators, succeeded in pushing her way through the crowd, and reaching the side of her mistress.

Lord Montressor raised Estelle with care, and, preceded by Lord Dazzleright, bore her from the court room into the sheriff's office, where he laid her on the sofa, dropped upon one knee by her side, and began to rub and chafe her hands, and invoke her by every fond epithet and hopeful word to awake—arise! Such restoratives as could be first procured were brought and applied, and with such good effect that, after a little while, a shudder passed through her frame, her breast heaved, her face quivered—she sighed and opened her eyes. Her glance met the anxious, earnest gaze of Lord Montressor bent upon her. She sighed again, and dropped her eyelids.

"Stella! my Stella! my bride! my wife! rouse yourself, dearest! You are acquitted, you are justified!" said Lord Montressor, anxiously seeking to restore her. "You are vindicated—you are free!"

"Free! free! oh God!" she cried, so despairingly, so incoherently, with a countenance so blanched and convulsed with anguish, that her friends drew near and gazed upon her in as much astonishment as alarm.

"Compose yourself, sweet Stella," murmured Lord Montressor, sitting down beside her, and gently smoothing away the beautiful, dishevelled black ringlets from her cold and clammy forehead. "Sweet love, be calm."

"I will—I am," she said, trying to control the motions of her quivering and ashen lips. Then gently putting aside his caressing hand, and rising upon her elbow, she inquired—

"But tell me, you, why was I acquitted, while all the other prisoners, who had been arraigned before me, were convicted? Did my father's, my friends,' and my——Lord Montressor's rank and wealth, and power, thrown into the scales of justice, tilt the balance in my favor? Had I only this advantage over other wretches?" she asked, fixing her dark eyes, querulous with suffering, upon the distressed face of the old clergyman.

"No, no, my child! This was not so! This would not have been so, of course! English law is no respecter of persons, and English courts are as incorruptible by wealth as they are undismayed by power. You owe your acquittal solely to your guiltlessness!"

"What!" she cried, fixing her wild, dilated eyes upon the old man's face—"was it not *true*, then?"

"Was not *what* true, my child?"

"That which the king's counsel said of me!"

"Assuredly not! The king's counsel himself did not believe the words that he spoke—his speech was a mere official form! Compose yourself, my child!"

"Oh, I will do so. I am composed; but hist!"—she said, sinking her voice to a whisper—"did they make me out to be my lord's wife?"

"Assuredly, my child, you are in strict law the wife of Lord Montressor—though the Judge of the Assizes, as well as he knew that fact, had no authority to pronounce upon it."

"Oh God! my God!" she cried, wringing her hands.

"Be calm, my child—do not let that omission distress you, for though the judge had no authority to give judgment upon an affair that belonged exclusively to the ecclesiastic courts, yet neither was his judgment needed! We all know now, as we knew before, that you are really and truly the wife of Lord Montressor! Have we not ever since your marriage addressed you only by his name?"

"Lord! my Lord!" she cried, still twisting and wringing her white fingers.

"Why, Estelle, my child, what ails you?—have you borne up through all the trial to sink at last in the hour of your triumph?"

"Triumph was it? Oh! Lord in Heaven! Lord of pity!"

"Estelle! Estelle!"

"You said that I was truly the wife of Lord Montressor!"

"Undoubtedly, my child!"

"Then it was the wife of Lord Montressor who was this day tried for —— saints in heaven! I cannot name the charge!" she groaned, with the sweat of agony bursting from her icy brow.

"Estelle," said Lord Montressor, now seating himself by her side and taking her hand—"you are ill—nervous. This is nothing new, nothing that we have not known for a month past, why then should it distress you?"

"Ah, my lord! but it is! for I did not mind what they out of pity called me! I called my lost self Estelle L'Orient! I thought it was Estelle L'Orient who was to be tried upon that degrading charge! And had it been Estelle L'Orient, it had not signified! But that the wife of the Viscount Montressor should suffer this degradation—oh! angels in heaven! it is terrible!—it is terrible!"

"Estelle, you rave! pray try, for our sakes, to control yourself, love!"

"But they spoke falsely—falsely! It *was* Estelle L'Orient who was tried for —— what I cannot speak! It was *Estelle L'Orient*, and no other: *Your* honorable name, my lord, was never dragged down through such mire!—it remains clear of blame!—none bearing it ever came to shame!"

"Assuredly not! and none have borne it more blamelessly than my beloved Stella; but, dear one, you talk so wildly that you had best not speak at all—come! drink this, and then lie down and be quiet for a few minutes," he said, placing to her lips a glass of ice-water that had just been brought in by her maid. She quaffed it, but instead of lying down, she straightened her figure up, put up her hands and pushed the overshadowing black ringlets from her brow, and said—

"Yes—I will—I must control myself. There! I am calmer now. Am I not, my friends?"

"Yes—the water has done you good. You are better, but you must rest a little while."

"No—let us leave this place—I shall recover sooner without its walls."

"As you please, then, love! Let your maid rearrange your dress. Our travelling-carriage waits, and the afternoon wanes; yet before the moon rises over the hills of Dorset, I would welcome you to your new home—Montressor Castle," said his lordship, affectionately busying himself in tying her little bonnet, and tucking in her stray ringlets.

"Ah! *would you?*—would you take Estelle to your ancestral home, where never a dishonored woman trod before?"

"Estelle! you almost anger me, love! do not talk so insanely!" said his lordship. But she had dropped her hands idly upon her lap, and with her gaze fastened abstractedly upon them, had fallen into a deep reverie that lasted several minutes, and might have lasted indefinitely longer, had not Lord Montressor gently recalled her attention to the necessity of departure. She started like one aroused from sleep—passed her hands once or twice across her brow, and then answered in a voice strange and unnatural from its level monotone—

"Lord Montressor, will you please to excuse me for to-night? I am not equal to the journey you propose."

"My dearest! the distance is but nine miles over the loveliest of roads, and in the easiest of carriages," replied his lordship, encouragingly.

"No doubt, no doubt—yet I cannot take the road to-day."

"Very well! As you please, dearest! I will then convey you to the 'Royal Adelaide,' the best and quietest little hotel in Exeter, where we can remain until you are thoroughly rested and restored. Will that plan suit my Stella?"

"You exhibit an angel's goodness to me, my lord, and I must tax it still farther! Listen! and pray do not misconceive me! I am not ungrateful; but—the scenes of the last month have so severely tried me—that even now, when I am acquitted, I cannot pass from the contemplation of the horrors that filled my mind and threatened my future, at once to the enjoyment of the security of your protection, and the blessedness of your love! I need a short interval of solitude, isolation, self-communion and prayer, before I dare enter the Eden you open to me! Suffer me, therefore, my dearest lord, to return, as heretofore, under the charge of our reverend friend to my apartments at the 'Crown and Sceptre.'"

"And then?"

"We shall meet again."

"To-morrow?"

"You may come and inquire for me, to-morrow noon."

"Estelle! do you really feel this interval to be necessary to your convenience?"

"It is vitally necessary to my *peace* and *sanity*, I think, my lord."

"Be it so, then! I cannot object, nor will I reproach you, my Stella, cruel as I feel this delay to be. Shall I attend you to your hotel?"

"If you will not think me ungrateful I prefer that you should take leave of me, as heretofore, at my carriage door."

"Well! I will obey my lady's behests, however unacceptable they may be, and that without cavilling," said his lordship.

"But, I may come to you to-morrow, you said?"

"Come to-morrow, my lord."

Estelle expressed herself now ready to depart. Mr. Oldfield arose and gave her his arm. Lord Montressor walked by her side, and attended her into the street and to the carriage.

"Farewell, until we meet, dear Stella," he said, as he placed her in the carriage.

"Aye! until we meet! Farewell, my lord," she answered solemnly—how solemnly he afterwards remembered—lifting her eyes to his countenance with a momentary, deep, earnest, thrilling gaze, as though she would make and receive an impression that should last through life!

Lord Montressor lifted her hand to his lips, bowed, and retired to give place to Mr. Oldfield, who entered the carriage, took the seat beside Estelle, and gave orders to the coachman to drive on.

The streets were still thronged with people, waiting for that carriage to pass, in hope of getting a sight of one whose name, for praise or blame, was now on every tongue.

"An honorable acquittal is assuredly the next worst thing to a conviction!" thought Mr. Oldfield, as he nervously let down the inner curtains to screen his companion from the vulgar gaze.

They finally reached their inn, the neighborhood of which was peopled by an expectant crowd, waiting to see their arrival.

Mr Oldfield wrapped her veil closely around the head of his charge, handed her out of the carriage, and led her quickly into the house, and up to their private parlor. As soon as they had reached this apartment, Estelle turned to her venerable friend, and said in a low voice—

"Mr. Oldfield, send the servants away; I wish to have a private conversation with you immediately."

The good clergyman complied. When they were alone, she threw back her veil, and said in an earnest, solemn voice—

"Mr Oldfield! you are a Christian minister! help me to do my duty!"

"Your *duty*, Lady Montressor?" repeated the clergyman, in a perplexed, misgiving, and questioning tone.

"Aye, my duty! my difficult—my dreadful duty!"

"I confess I do not understand you, Lady Montressor!"

"I will explain! I must withdraw myself at once and forever from Lord Montressor's neighborhood and knowledge!"

"My child, you are certainly mad!"

"Would I were!—but no! listen! That first marriage of mine may not have been a *legal* obstacle; but it is, nevertheless, an insurmountable *moral* obstacle to my union with any other man! And oh! amid all the gloom, and terror, and desolation of my life, I do rejoice and thank God for one signal blessing! that I was arrested immediately, on leaving the church, so that I lived not one moment as a wife with Lord Montressor! and not one moment must I so live with him! I must fly while there is yet time!

"My child, my dear Estelle, you distress me beyond measure by this rash resolution."

"It is not a sudden determination! Ah, no! A month ago, as soon as I recovered from the shock of my arrest, and collected my scattered faculties together, I thought of it, pondered over it, prayed over it, and *decided* upon it—long before the court had rendered judgment upon it. Had I been convicted, that conviction would have virtually released Lord Montressor. But I am acquitted, and I must by my own act release him. I ask you as a Christian minister to assist me in this duty."

"But, I am very much perplexed! You are certainly in *law* the wife of Lord Montressor.

"But not in right."

"How do you propose to release him?"

"By leaving the country; he will then in time forget me."

"He never can!"

"He must and will!"

"And then——?"

"An act of Parliament will release him from the bond of a merely nominal marriage."

The aged pastor did not reply, but sank into painful thought, broken by occasional groans.

At length, Estelle resumed—

"You have heard my plan—will you assist me in it?"

"No, Lady Montressor, I dare not."

"Why not?"

"Because I doubt it would be wrong to do so. It would be treachery on my part towards Lord Montressor, whose legal wife you are!"

"Oh! would to God I were indeed his rightful wife! Oh! would to God I were! But that I am not so—that I cannot be so, while Victoire L'Orient lives, you, a Christian minister, should know full well!" cried Estelle, passionately.

"Lady Montressor, I consider your conscience morbid upon this subject. Monsieur Victoire L'Orient has not the shadow of a claim to your hand. You never were his wife!" said the minister, solemnly.

Estelle grew paler than ever she had been before, and fixing her eyes steadily upon the face of her venerable friend, she slowly inquired—

"And if, as you say, I never was the wife of Victoire L'Orient—*what then was I to him?*"

The good old pastor winced and fidgetted, but at last replied—

"His innocent victim!"

"'His innocent victim!' And think you, then, that this 'victim' of Monsieur Victoire L'Orient is a fit and proper consort for the Right Honorable, the Viscount Montressor?"

"Madam, his lordship thinks so."

Slowly and sadly Estelle shook her head—

"No, Mr Oldfield! he is a moral hero—and he loves the poor woman before you. He would risk name, rank, and social influence—everything, save true honor, to rescue her from the slough of despond into which she has fallen. He would be the Curtius to throw himself into the yawning abyss opened in my life."

"Lady Montressor, you are wrong upon this subject! You accuse yourself too bitterly. Reflect! your sole error in this affair was a thoughtless disregard of your filial relations. Even that fault I am constrained to say was very much palliated by the circumstances in which you were placed—from earliest infancy under the sole charge and absolute rule of an artful and unscrupulous woman. You were the victim, I repeat, of a pair of accomplished villains—mother and son. As far as your part in that quasi marriage went you acted in good faith, you believed the proceeding to be a lawful one. If that marriage was illegal and has been vacated, you are not to be blamed; the fault was not yours. History and biography record many cases in which, under like circumstances, the marriages even of kings and queens have been dissolved, or rather pronounced invalid from the beginning, and the parties have been left free to contract second matrimonial engagements. Lord Montressor, I am sure; takes this view of the subject."

Again and more mournfully Estelle shook her head.

"Ah, Mr Oldfield! My lord thinks only of me—but I—I think of *him*, and of what he will have to bear for my sake!" Then breaking into passionate sorrow, she exclaimed—"Once, and long before he ever had the misfortune to look upon this fatal face of mine—wherever he appeared, his presence spread a certain festive gladness, like the coming of a hero or the shining of the sun! 'That is Lord Montressor,' would cry one exultant voice! 'Where?' would question a dozen eager tones and glances! 'There! there! that tall man, with the kingly brow and saintly smile! That is he! you cannot mistake him!' would reply those who knew his person. For every one knew his *name*. And *then* all eyes turned upon him in admiration and worship!——But *now*! but *now*! how different, oh my God! Listen what he may have to bear and I may have to hear! We go into public—into church, festive hall or mart,—it does not matter which!—some busy body, who knows his face whispers 'That is Lord Montressor.' 'What! he who married that woman who was tried before the Assizes?' asks one. 'What! he who took away another man's bride?' inquires another. (For so, many will view it! So soon are good deeds forgotten, so little it requires, to distort facts, and take away an honorable man's good name.) But no! no! no! no! they shall not have this thing to say of my lord!—of my dear, dear and honored lord! whose name shall shine unclouded among the stars!—for whose good and happiness I would willingly become ——what would I *not* become? The dust of the earth that all men trample—if that could raise *him* higher, or make him happier! I will go away, far away, he shall not know whither! He shall never hear of me again! I shall be dead to him! An act of parliament will set him free from the bond of our nominal union. Then the most that the bitterest caviller can say, will be—'That is Lord Montressor who married Miss Morelle, that was tried at Exeter! Happily he divorced her, before the marriage was consummated.' In time the caviller will forget to say even so much; as in time Lord Montressor will also forget his lost Estelle, and be happy!"

"Happy? he! Lord Montressor! My child, from my own observations of the past month I feel assured that Lord Montressor will never find happiness in forgetfulness of you!"

"He must and shall! I will in my retirement besiege Heaven with prayers for his peace! Did ever a woman wear out her days and nights with prayers that the husband whom she loves, may cease to love and may forget her? So will I pray, and so shall my lord find peace! But we lose precious time! Say! will you aid me to leave this place secretly?"

"Assuredly not, Lady Montressor."

"And is this your ultimatum?"

"Absolutely, Lady Montressor."

"Mr. Oldfield! are you then a Christian minister, or are you only the incumbent of Bloomingdale?" asked the lady, in sorrowful bitterness of spirit.

"I humbly trust that I am a Christian minister; but not therefore a fanatic, Lady Montressor."

"And do you think it a Christian act to refuse to aid me in my conscientious withdrawal from Lord Montressor?"

"I take the part of law and order, my lady, and such I think the duty of every Christian."

"And I—take the part of God and—war, if need be—choose martyrdom if need be! Good night, *most Christian minister!*" said Lady Montressor, rising to leave the room.

"Good night, my child. You are sarcastic; but I do not deserve it. You will sleep on this; and to-morrow you will think better of it and me. God bless and comfort you, my child. Good night," said the old man, very mildly.

Estelle smiled mournfully, ironically, as she passed to the door; but while her hand rested upon the lock, her heart relented—repented—she turned back, went to the side of her venerable friend, took his aged hand, and said—

"Forgive my unkind words. Trouble makes me irritable and unjust—yes! and ungrateful! For you have been very good to me; when my father and my mother forsook me, *you* took me up; when I stood arraigned upon a criminal and degrading charge, *you* stood at my side, sustaining me. Do you think that I can ever forget, or be thankless to you? Oh never! no! God bless and preserve you! God love you and reward you! Good night! *Good night!*" she cried, and pressed his hand fervently to her heart and lips—then dropt it, turned and hurried from the room.

The good clergyman never looked upon her living face again.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FLIGHT OF ESTELLE.

"Enough that we are parted—that there rolls
A flood of headlong fate between our souls,
Whose darkness severs me as wide from thee,
As hell from heaven to all eternity!" MOORE

"Yet! oh yet! thyself deceive not!
Love may sink by slow decay!
But by sudden wrench, believe not,
Hearts can thus be torn away." BYRON.

When Lady Montressor reached her own apartment she found her faithful attendant, Susan Copsewood, kneeling among the trunks, in the middle of the floor, busily engaged in packing them.

On hearing the door opened, Susan arose from her knees to receive and attend upon her mistress; but started and stood aghast on beholding the wild and haggard countenance of the lady. True, she had often seen that beauteous countenance darkened with the midnight of despair, or convulsed with a storm of passionate sorrow; and so she had no right to be amazed at any of its tempestuous changes; but she had never seen anything like this—this half-insane, death-like look!

"Heaven and earth, my lady! what is it? What new misfortune? What can I do for you? Sit down, dear Madam—here!" she exclaimed, recovering her presence of mind sufficiently to enable her to draw forward an easy chair and place her mistress in it. Lady Montressor sank down into the seat and dropt her face upon her open hands, while her veil of long, black ringlets fell forward concealing them.

"Lady—dear lady! What is the matter? What can I do for you?" pleaded Susan, kneeling by her mistress's side and looking up imploringly to her hidden face—"dear, dear lady, what can I do for you?—what is it?"

"Oh! nothing, nothing, Susan!"

"Forgive me, dear Madam, but you always say that! And this is not just *nothing!*"

"Susan ——?"

"My dearest mistress!"

"I think you *love* me?"

"Do you think the sun *warms* you, dear lady?"

"And I know you are *faithful* to me."

"If I were half as faithful to the Lord, I should be sure of Heaven, my lady."

"Hush! speak lower. Go and see if the passage is clear, and then lock the door."

Susan obeyed, and then returned and kneeled down by her mistress's side.

Lady Montressor dropt her hands from her agonized face and looked down deeply into the honest, affectionate eyes that were lifted so imploringly to hers.

"Susan, I *know* you will be worthy of the great trust I am about to repose in you."

"Try me, Madam! try me! if it is a secret, they might put me on an old time rack and wrench and screw my limbs until their own limbs ached with the labor, and they'd never screw anything out of my lips that was put into my heart by your ladyship!"

"I do believe you speak sincerely; but your fidelity will not be put to so severe a test, Susan," said Lady Montressor. Then, after a thoughtful pause, during which she sat with her head resting wearily on her hand, and her eyes fixed upon the floor, she suddenly looked up and said—

"Susan, I must go to London to-night."

"Madam! My lady!" exclaimed the girl, in consternation.

"I must depart in secret and alone," continued Lady Montressor, while Susan gazed with no abatement of surprise and anxiety.

"*You* will, therefore, have to make all necessary arrangements for me."

"But, Madam—but, my dearest mistress——"

"Be silent, dear girl, or rather listen to me, and answer my questions. When does the Bristol train go?"

"At twelve to-night, and at six in the morning, Madam."

"I must go by the night train. How far is the depot from this house, Susan?"

"At least a mile, my lady."

"What o'clock is it now?"

"It has just struck eight, Madam."

"No later? good! We can complete all necessary arrangements in three hours, and I can leave here by eleven and reach the depot in time. Go now, dear girl, and engage a hackney coach to be in readiness.—No! that would never do—that would betray me. I must walk the distance."

"Dear, dear lady, you could never walk it—never!"

"Yes, I am able. I shall walk," said Lady Montressor, so calmly and resolutely, that her maid dared not pursue the argument; but looking at her mistress through eyes obscured with tears, she said—

"Dear, dear lady, you keep on saying 'I,' and 'I,' 'I can leave,' and 'I shall walk,' as if—as if—as if—oh!———" cried Susan, suddenly breaking down and sobbing aloud.

Her mistress gazed upon her in calm surprise, while she sobbed and caught her breath, and sobbed again, struggling through the fit into composure. Then when the girl, with a few ebbing, little sobs, wiped her eyes, Lady Montressor said—

"Now then, Susan, why do you grieve?"

The question nearly set Susan off again, but she valiantly slaughtered a sob with a hiccough, and answered, rather accusatively, by saying—

"You keep on repeating 'I' and 'I' as if—as if—you were going to leave me behind."

"What! do you wish to go with me, Susan?"

"Oh! my lady."

"But I am about to leave England—to leave all my past, easy and pleasant life behind, and to go into retirement in some foreign country."

"Well, my lady! what have I done to deserve to be cast off and left behind?"

"Nothing ill, have you done, my dear girl! but do you really wish to leave your native country, your home and friends, and attach yourself to the doubtful fortunes of a hapless fugitive like your mistress?"

"Dear lady, I have neither father, nor mother—nor any one to love and serve but *you*——"

"I will leave a letter with you for Mr. Oldfield, who will procure you a better home than I could ever give you."

"It isn't *that*," said Susan, with a certain quiet self-respect. "I would get homes enough, dear lady; but ——"

"But what?"

"I wish to go with *you*. I love you my lady. I would follow you to the world's end!"

"If you follow me, it may even be to that extent, dear girl!" said Lady Montressor, extending her hand to Susan, who caught and covered it with kisses.

"I may go, your ladyship?"

"It is only for your own sake I hesitate, to say—yes, Susan."

The girl chose to hear only the two last words of Lady Montressor's reply, and arose with alacrity to wait her next orders.

"You may put up a change of clothing in a small packet—that will be sufficient for me. The trunks must be left here for the present—to take them with us would be to blazon our journey. By the way, how came they all open, and in the middle of the floor?" said Lady Montressor, noticing for the first time the confusion of the room.

"Pardon, my lady. But when we were leaving the court room, his lordship—Lord Montressor I mean, said to me—'Susan, my good child, hasten home and pack your lady's trunks before she shall have time to get there, so that she shall not be incommoded and fatigued by the confusion.' And I was doing it, your ladyship, not expecting you in so soon."

"Oh, the dear! the kind! the ever-thoughtful! Oh, *my lord! my lord!*" murmured Estelle in low, inaudible, heart-broken tones, as this little instance of Lord Montressor's ever-considerate love touched her heart.

"Dear lady, you are not well! You have taken no rest and no refreshment since morning. Let me undress you; lie down and rest, while I go and order something for you."

"I cannot! Oh, I cannot, Susan!"

"But Lady Montressor——"

"Do not teaze me, dear girl! I can neither eat nor sleep."

"But how then will your ladyship have strength to reach the cars?"

"Truly! that is well put! I thank you, Susan, for reminding me. Well, well, if I must take something, go order a cup of coffee, it will be sufficient."

"And, dear lady, won't you lie down and sleep, while I go and have it prepared?"

"Well, well, my girl, to please you I will lie down, whether I can sleep or not," replied Lady Montressor, who then arose and permitted her maid to loosen her dress and arrange her comfortably upon the couch where she laid down, but not to *sleep!* not even to *rest!* There was no rest for that tempest-tost soul.

Susan closed the blinds, let down the curtains, and having thus darkened the chamber, stole out to do her errand.

And Lady Montressor, after many hours of excitement, found herself in the calm of solitude. Alone! but alone with her heart! alone with her Tempter! She had thought the moral struggle over, the victory won, the Tempter fled! But ah! no sooner did she find herself thus alone, than the Evil spirit, in his fairest guise, re-appeared to her, beset her, arrayed before her tearless, burning eyes and bleeding heart, the loveliness of the life she was leaving, the desolation of the doom to which she was departing! Ah! how difficult, how cruel, how insupportable the duty, to turn away from native country, from home, from friends, and more than all from *him*—from *him*, and go out sorrowing, alone and exposed, into the wide, bleak, dreary, desolate world! It was like going into the "outer darkness" spoken of in the Scriptures! To go far away, out of his knowledge, and out of his reach! never again to meet his dear familiar eyes and smile! never again to hear one tone of his beloved voice! never to expect his coming or listen for his step! never to get a letter from him and never to write one! never to hear of him again in the whole course of her life!—never! never! How insufferable, while yet living, thus to die away from his knowledge, to die to him! It was like being buried alive! like going with her warm young blood, and loving heart, and thinking brain, down, down into the grave, to be smothered under the stifling clods of the earth!

"I cannot do it! I cannot! Oh, God! it is too much! too much!" she cried, wringing her pale fingers in the extremity of anguish. The Tempter, ever watchful to take advantage of our weakest moment, whispered—That she need not do it! that she was not required thus to immolate her rich, warm young life! to leave *him* bereaved! She was free to live with him forever! for was he not her legal husband? She could fold her spirit's bruised and weary wings and nestle down sweetly into his home and heart, held open to enfold her! The temptation was invincible, irresistible! it drew her soul onward with a mighty magnetism.

"I faint—I yield—Oh, God! my God! come to aid! save, or I perish!" she cried, and suddenly lost all consciousness!

A strange vision passed before her spirit. She was in the heart of a vast and dense forest whose tall, dark trees encircled and nodded over the banks of a lake of crystal clearness and unfathomable depth. She stood, frightened, and despairing, she knew not wherefore, until looking down into the dark, transparent waters, she beheld her husband, Lord Montressor, sinking, drowning! With a cry of desolation, she was about to cast herself into the lake, when she felt herself gently held back, and looking over her shoulder, she beheld a man of celestial presence, arrayed in flowing white garments, standing behind her, holding her by his left hand, while his right hand was lifted towards Heaven in a gesture of supreme majesty! Full of awe her gaze followed his index, and she beheld high in the Heavens, the ascending form of her husband. And so she understood that it was but the *reflected image* of the ascending form, that she had mistaken for her husband sinking in the water! "And thus," said the celestial Mentor—"the apparent perishing of the beautiful hopes of earth is but the inverted reflection of their translation to Heaven!"

With this vision before her, with this voice in her ears, she gently opened her eyes—restored to full consciousness. How quiet after the tempest of emotion, was now her soul, how patient her spirit—how short and unreal, mortal and visible life seemed; how real and eternal the invisible and spiritual! Her whole being was calmed, and strengthened, and elevated. Her first waking thoughts were prayers for courage, for fortitude! for oh! withal she needed a martyr's firmness and heroism, to persevere and tread unflinchingly the dread path of duty she had chosen!

Presently her maid stole in on tiptoe, and cautiously approached the couch.

"I am not sleeping, Susan, child. You may ring and order lights," the lady said.

Susan obeyed And when lights were brought and Susan could see her mistress's face,—

"You are better, my lady," she said, cheerfully.

"I am better, Susan," replied Lady Montressor, rising and suffering her attendant to bathe her face and hands, and comb her hair and arrange her dress. When these toilet services were rendered, the maid rang again and was answered by the waiter, who made his appearance with a tray of refreshments for Lady Montressor.

Susan placed a sofa-table beside the couch upon which her ladyship reclined, arranged the viands upon it, and pressed her mistress to partake of them.

Lady Montressor forced herself to swallow a piece of bread and a few mouthfuls of coffee. Then pushing the salver from her, she said—

"There! take these things away, my girl, and go and get your supper, while I write two letters that must be left behind."

Susan did as she was ordered.

And Lady Montressor when left alone, went and sat down at her writing table, and wrote—first, a short note of adieu, which she folded and directed to Mr. Oldfield.

Then she commenced a farewell letter to Lord Montressor. She poured out her whole heart and soul freely upon that paper!—page after page, sheet after sheet, was filled as her pen flew along the lines; her undying love, her terrible temptation, her agonizing struggle, her final, despairing renunciation—all, all, was poured forth with the living eloquence of a loving, despairing, impassioned heart! At last she paused, exhausted, and laid down her pen.

Had she finished? Had she poured forth all her burning brain thought?—all her bleeding heart felt?

Ah, no!—not a millionth part! And yet she had said too much! too much!

"Alas! how inconsistent I am! how weak," she said; "I practice self-denial at one point, and fall into self-indulgence at another! Why, to write *thus, to him*, is almost as wrong as to remain and live with him! For, oh! if I should send him this letter, showing him how much I love and suffer and despair, he will never resign me, never free himself and forget me and be happy! No, no, he would search for me over the world, and not finding me, would sit down in his 'chamber of desolation' to mourn me forever! That must not be! He must not know the anguish of this bosom. I must drink this cup of renunciation to the dregs, denying my heart even the sorrowful consolation of writing to him;—save, perhaps, a few lines of friendly leave-taking."

She tore up her first and impassioned letter, and then she took a sheet of paper and wrote a short note of adieu, which she folded and directed.

A few minutes after this her maid returned to the room, and announced that her few preparations were complete, and that it was near eleven o'clock.

"Are *you* ready, Susan?"

"Yes, Madam," replied the girl, tying on her bonnet.

"Is the house quiet?"

"Our portion of it is, my lady."

"Very well, then. Now give me my cottage bonnet and shawl.—Thank you. Now my thick veil and my gloves.—That is right. Have you the packet?"

"Yes, Madam."

"We are ready, then, I believe?"

"Yes, my lady," replied Susan; but still she lingered.

"Come, then, why do you loiter?"

"Forgive me, dear lady! but I knew you could not walk; besides, it is coming on to rain hard; so I took the liberty of going out and engaging a cab, that is to wait for us at the corner of the next square. Pray do not be uneasy, dear lady; the cabman knows nothing, but that he is to take two passengers to the cars."

"Well, well, my girl! you acted for the best, and I do not blame you, but thank you; and trust that your act may not lead to a premature discovery of our flight. Come! let us go," said Lady Montressor, and she placed the two letters in a conspicuous position on the mantle-piece, while Susan extinguished the lights.

They then left the chamber; Susan closed the door after them. And so Lady Montressor, attended by her faithful servant, went down the stairs, through the long passage, and out by the private door—out into the double darkness of the midnight and the tempest!

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

* * *

Life.—Life is to the unhappy as a prison, from whose gloom they cannot escape; while to the happy, it resembles a vast palace filled with all that can delight. The prison may be rendered endurable by resignation; but the palace loses some of its bright coloring and gilding every day, until nought but faded remnants of its pristine beauty remain.

* * *

Associates.—We herd with the gay in our days of happiness, but turn to the sympathising when misfortune overtakes us: as we seek the festive hall in our hours of mirth, and fly to the solitude of our chamber in those of sorrow.

* * *

Style.—To praise the style of an author more than his thoughts, is like commending a woman for her dress more than for her person. Style, like dress, should be appropriate, and not detract attention from what it was meant to adorn.

LITTLE BESS.

BY EMMA ALICE BROWNE

Under the violets and the moss
She sleepeth with pale hands across,
Safe from any sense of loss.

Over her leans the solemn sky,
A vision of mist floats dimly by—
She giveth neither smile nor cry.

She giveth neither a cry nor moan,
Though years and years she lieth alone
Under the moss, and a roof of stone!

Slowly the sweet years come and go,
Across her sleeping the summers blow,
With lilies white as the drifted snow.

Violet eyes and locks of gold,
They laid her in the damp chill mould,
A little child of six years old!

But ever and ever and ever more,
I see her face when the day is o'er,
Flash through the sunset's golden door.

And she comes to me in the dreams of night
Out of her sphere of music and light,
An Angel crowned with the infinite!

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THE
TWO-FINGERED ASSASSIN.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

I was on my way from Jackson to Greensboro, in the State of Mississippi. At Lexington I left the great stage-road, and struck off to the right by a less frequented way. One evening—a pleasant evening in summer—I arrived at quite a village where I must pass the night. Upon entering the inn I found quite a number of guests there, and soon learned that the court was in session in that place.

The next morning was dull and drizzly, and I resolved to stop over one stage and attend court, as I learned that one or two very important cases were to be tried. I entered the court room, which was built for town purposes, with a lawyer whose acquaintance I had made; and through his influence I got a good seat. The place was literally crowded within ten minutes from the time the doors were opened; and I hence judged that an important case was to come off. And I was not disappointed.

The first case was one of murder. The prisoner was brought in, and placed in the rough box which had been fixed up; and when I had examined his features I made up my mind that if he did do the deadly deed, he must have done it in a moment of maddening passion; for, really, had I been told to select a murderer from all that throng, the prisoner at the bar would have been the last one selected! He was not over four-and twenty; small and delicately framed; with large, mild blue eyes; flaxen hair; and with features perfectly regular, and marked by a spirit of good will and intelligence. He looked pale and haggard now; and seemed to shun the gaze of the assembled multitude.

The murder had only been committed two days before. But the coroner had found a verdict at once; an indictment quickly followed; and as the court chanced to be in session at the time, the case, being so clear, was brought on.

From the opening of the prosecution I learned the following facts: The man who had been murdered was a wealthy planter, forty-eight years of age, named Owen Payne. On the evening of the murder he had started from a lawyer's office, on horseback, to return to his plantation, which was five miles distant; and an hour afterwards his body was found, weltering in its own blood, upon the roadside, within a piece of wood two miles from the village.

The prisoner at the bar was named Thomas Watkins Roby; and he was a step-son of the planter. Payne had married his mother some four years before—had lived with her until within two months of the present time, when he had turned her out of his house, and forbidden her ever to enter it again. She had returned to the village, where her son, the prisoner, had since supported her.

Thomas had never liked Owen Payne. He knew him to be a hard drinker—a bad man—and a libertine; and he had done all in his power to prevent his mother from marrying him. He could not bear the thought that such a man should be the husband of his mother. But the marriage took place, and the result was as we have seen. The poor wife pined away beneath her husband's brutality and neglect; and finally, because she would not give up her own couch to a Creole slave-girl, he beat her, and then turned her out of doors!

It appeared in evidence that Owen Payne had come to town on some business with his attorney. When he married with Mrs Roby he made a will in her favor. Since then he had made one in favor of his favorite slave, whom he had set free. In an hour of passion he destroyed this second will, and made a new one in favor of a drunken companion of his. In three months that was destroyed, and another made in favor of a second creole. Lately, however, a nephew of his—a son of his brother—named Richard Payne, had come to visit him; and all former wills were revoked, and a new one made giving everything to this nephew. How long that would have stood had the planter lived is not clear; but probably not long, for Richard Payne was a loose, sporting character, and was very ugly when drunk. And it afterwards appeared—— But never mind. We shall come to that soon.

Presently a man named Christopher Gratt was called upon the stand. He was an honest looking drover, of middle age, and seemed sorry that he was obliged to testify. But he did so, and as follows:—

He and a companion were on their way afoot to the town. Just at dusk they came to the cypress wood, where the road is built over a small swamp, and just as they entered this wood a horse came galloping past them with saddle and bridle on. Their first impulse was to catch the horse; but they thought that perhaps his rider had been thrown and hurt, so they hurried on to find him. Near the other end of the wood they saw a man stooping over something, with his back towards them. They hurried up, and found the prisoner at the bar just in the act of pulling a Bowie knife from a deep wound in the breast of a man who lay beneath him! They at once took him into custody, and then hurried on for help.

The next witness was another drover named Henry Page. He had been with Gratt, and was the companion spoken of. His testimony was exactly the same as the last. Only he was further questioned concerning the prisoner's behavior upon the occasion. He said the young man was frightened when they took him, and couldn't talk at all, only very incoherently and wildly.

These witnesses were not cross-examined, as the prisoner informed his counsel that they had spoken truly.

The next testimony elicited was important. It was to the effect that just at the fall of sunset, while the shadows were longest, and the sun hung redly upon the horizon, young Roby returned from a fishing excursion. At the inn he learned that Owen Payne was in town. "No," said the hostler, who had just come in, "he has just started for home. He was pretty drunk, so I guess he'll reach his house by morning."

Upon this Roby started up and declared he would go and overtake him. His words on the occasion, as sworn to by no less than five persons, were—

"I'll find him, and I'll have satisfaction! He shall either make to my mother the fullest reparation, or I'll take reparation myself!"

Something was further said about his taking a horse.

"No," he returned, "I know how he rides. I can overtake him before he reaches the swamp. *It shall be a dearly reached swamp to him if I do!*"

Others were found ready to testify that they had frequently heard him make threats against Owen Payne's life!

Surely this all looked dark.

At this point a side door was opened and a litter was borne into the room, and upon it was the body of the murdered man! The two drovers were asked if that was the body over which they had seen the prisoner. They said it was. A knife was then shown them, and they identified it as the one they had taken from Roby! Others swore that it was Roby's knife.

Finally the prisoner was allowed to tell his story. He struggled awhile with his feelings, but at length managed to control his emotions sufficiently for speech.

He said that the witnesses thus far had all told the truth with the exception of one point. The knife produced was not his. He had lost his bowie-knife a month before. His mother bought two knives some years ago, and gave him one, keeping one herself. The one she kept, to use for pruning vines, and cutting fruit, she had left at Mr Payne's, and had not seen it since. On the evening in question he started after the planter as had been stated. His idea was, either to induce him to make some provision for his mother, who was his (the planter's) true wife, or else to challenge him. He had meant, on former occasions, when speaking of revenge, the same—to challenge him and fight him. That was all he meant at the inn. When he left the village on that occasion he started into an easy trot, which he kept up until he reached the cypress wood. He had just entered when he saw a man rush out towards him, and, at the distance of some three rods, plunge into the swamp. He kept on, and in a few minutes more he came to where a man was lying upon the ground by the road side. He stooped over, and found it to be Owen Payne. He saw that he had been murdered, and also saw the knife-handle projecting above the heart. He drew it out; and just then two men came up, both of whom he now recognized in the witnesses who had testified to seeing him there. He owned that he was startled, for the thought of his position flashed upon him with all its bearing circumstances. He remembered his known hatred for the deceased, his many seeming threats, and the remarks he had made not an hour before! He called on God to witness that he would have withheld the assassin's hand had he been in season, for he could not see even an enemy suffer unjustly.

After this, much testimony was introduced to prove the prisoner's previous good character. But all the jury knew that; for they all knew him, and knew how upright, steady, and industrious he was.

The prosecution introduced one more witness as a sort of rebut. This was Richard Payne, the nephew of Owen, and now supposed to be his heir. He was a dark-featured man, of about thirty; tall and stout in frame, with black, crisp, curly hair, and black eyes; and wearing a look of deep dissipation. It required but a single look to prove that his mother had been either a mulatto or a quadroon.

Richard Payne swore that his uncle had several times told him that he was afraid of Thomas or Tom, Roby. The witness, upon asking him why, had been told that the young fellow had not only threatened to kill him (Owen,) but had once actually waylaid him in that very wood, and that to assassinate him; but the fleetness of his horse had saved him. This witness gave his testimony very emphatically, and with a spice of vengeance in it. He stood erect, carrying his hands, which were both gloved, behind him.

"Mr. Witness," said the prisoner's counsel, "you are the heir to your uncle Owen's estate?"

"Yes, sir."

"He has made a will to that effect?"

"Yes, sir."

"You are probably aware that he was rather erratic in this respect? I mean you knew that he had made several wills before this one?"

"Yes, sir."

"And didn't you ever fear that he might make another?"

"No—sir." Rather confusedly.

"Suppose I were to tell you that he *had* made another will?" Abruptly.

"I—I—know he didn't!" the witness stammered, turning pale as death, but recovering quickly.

"Do you know, sir, that I am the lawyer whom he came to see on the day of his murder?"

"I knew he came to see one, sir."

"Yes, sir—and I am the one. Curious that I should be his attorney and administrator, and also counsel for the man accused of his murder, isn't it?"

"I—I—don't know, sir."

"Tell me: Didn't you get very drunk on the evening before your uncle came to this village?"

"Me, sir? No, sir!"

"Ah—beware. I have the proof. You won't make anything by lying. Now weren't you drunk?"

"No—not drunk, sir. I had drunk some, I will admit."

"Aye—and you had a quarrel with your uncle?"

"No, sir. Not a quarrel. He blamed me some for what I did."

"And you struck him?"

"Struck-him?"

"Aye—you struck him."

"No,—not a regular blow. We had a little brush."

"Yes—I understand. You struck him; and under that provocation your uncle came here and had me make a new will! It was made, signed, sealed, witnessed, and duly registered before he left for home! What do you think of that?"

The witness grasped the little round rail in front of him for support, and his face turned to a dark ashen hue. He trembled at every joint, and it was some moments ere he could speak. At length he managed to gasp,—

"It's false! He did not make a new will!"

"Well—never mind now whether he did or not. I know, however, that you feared he would make a new one."

"I—I——"

"Ah—no falsehood! I know of what I speak."

After this the counsel, whose name was Parkhill, and who was accounted second only to Prentiss on murder trials, turned to the court—

"May it please your honor, and you, gentlemen of the jury, I have urged the keeping of the body of the deceased here because there was something upon it which I wished examined in open court, and before the jury. I have two eminent surgeons here, and with your leave we will proceed with the examination."

"Will you keep the witness on the stand?"

"Yes, sir. I may wish to question him."

By this time every eye was turned upon Richard Payne; and I could easily perceive that the opinions of people were rapidly changing. Before all had looked upon the prisoner with that mysterious kind of sorrow which is partly made up of wonder and condemnation; but now their suspicions were turned upon the dark nephew, and when they regarded Tom Roby it was with pure sympathy.

The body of the murdered man had been covered with a black pall, and when that was removed the body was left bare to the waist. The crowd pushed forward to gain a view of the wounds—there were four of them—but the officers soon succeeded in restoring quiet. Mr. Parkhill caused the body to be turned over, and then pointed out to the physician two marks—one upon the neck and one upon the right shoulder. The one upon the neck had the stains of blood, but the other was only the mark made by some kind of a grip.

"Doctor," said the counsel, "you have examined these once before, when your attention was too much called to other points to notice them much. But now you can give them a careful scrutiny, and of course be governed somewhat by what you can clearly remember of their appearance before.

"I would say, gentlemen of the jury, that we noticed these marks when the first examination was held, and you remember the result as given in the doctor's testimony. The deceased must have struggled hard, for there were evidently many blows given by the assassin ere he hit; and that the wounds upon the breast-bone were made first we know from the fact that it was from the deep wound that the prisoner was seen to pull the knife. These marks are evidently—— But I wont anticipate. Doctor, give me your opinion."

"These marks," answered the elder of the two doctors, "were made by the grip of a hand. The first grip must have been upon the shoulder, and only separated from the flesh by the thin shirt, as Payne had his coat thrown across his saddle-bow. That grip was the first and the hardest one. The stricken man must have broken from his hold, for we find the shirt torn over that spot——"

"Here," said Parkhill, producing and exhibiting the bloody shirt, and showing the rent upon the shoulder.

"Before the assassin caught his man again he had got his hand bloody, for two of the wounds upon the sternum separated large veins. With that bloody hand the assassin caught him by the back of the neck—you can see the blood-mark plainly, as it has been very carefully shielded from contact with anything."

"But that don't look like the grip of a human hand," said one of the jurors, examining very carefully

"So it doesn't," added another.

"But here is the mark of a thumb, *very* plainly made," said the doctor; "and here is the mark of the fore finger; and here is the mark of the little, or fourth finger."

"Yes—it may be." returned the bothered juror; "but what are them marks?"

'Them" marks alluded to were broad blotches, between the two finger marks, and some three inches below their ends. It was a curious looking mark for the impression of human hands, and no mistake.

'It must have been the left hand," resumed the doctor, "as you can see by the relative position of the thumb."

"If *'tis* a hand," suggested the juror. "I must say as how't it don't look like a hand to me."

"Suppose," remarked Parkhill, calmly and distinctly, "I should tell you that the hand which fastened its grip there *had lost its two middle fingers?*"

"O—oh—yes, *yes*. Now I see. O, yes. That's it—that's it. Now it's plain. Let's have a look at the prisoner's fingers!"

"O—he has his fingers all safe; but here is a man, who, I think, has not."

Thus speaking the attorney turned to Richard Payne, and bade him remove the glove from his left hand. The witness didn't do it; nor did he refuse to do it, but he sank back, and leaned against the judge's bench for support. The sheriff was directed to do the work, and he proceeded at once to perform it. The witness gave a convulsive start as the officer placed his hand upon him, and drew his left hand away; but it was quickly taken, and the glove removed. The two middle fingers of this glove were found to be made of some kind of pliable material, so that a motion of the adjoining fingers would move them. But the hand was sadly mutilated. A pistol had exploded in his grasp some years before, *and carried away from the left hand the two middle fingers!* The glove was an ingenious contrivance to conceal his mishap in company.

Upon this discovery, Mr Richard Payne fainted entirely away, and was taken in charge by the two doctors, who soon revived him. The effect upon the spectators was electrical. They started up with one simultaneous shout, and for several minutes such howling, hooting, and cheering prevailed as I never heard before nor since.

At the suggestion of Parkhill four officers were sent off to Payne's plantation to make search for further evidence. Having been thoroughly instructed by the counsel they hurried off; and the court meanwhile took a recess, the people retaining their places for fear of losing them if they left.

In just two hours the officers returned. They brought with them a pair of pantaloons, a shirt, and vest—all marked with the name, "Richard Payne," and dabbled in blood. They had been conducted to the nephew's chamber by an old negro woman, and these clothes they found in the bottom of his trunk.

The case was given to the jury, and in just three minutes they returned with a verdict of Not Guilty—the foreman stating that the verdict was found upon the fact that the true murderer had been discovered!

The scene that followed can be easily imagined by any one who is acquainted with the manners of that section. Thomas Roby was taken up by stout men and borne out of the house, and carried to his home, where his mother, who could not bear the scene of the court room, was eagerly awaiting news of the result.

But the return of her noble boy was not all. In a short time Mr. Parkhill arrived, and informed the widow that Mr Payne had made a new will, by which all his property was once more given to her!

"He came to me on that fatal day," said the lawyer, "and told me he must make one more will. He said Richard was a villain, and a gambler. He had struck his uncle only the night before in a drunken fit. The planter said he had wronged you, and that he would make all the restitution in his power. His intention was to get rid of his nephew, and then coax you back to live with him—to live with him only so long as he should be kind and true. He told me he hadn't seen a moment of real comfort since you left him. And he also told me that he had reason to believe that Richard entertained the thought of killing him to prevent his making a new will. The villain did the deed; but he sadly missed his mark."

Richard Payne was tried for the murder of his uncle, and convicted; and on the day of his execution he made a full confession. He said he felt sure his uncle meant to make a new will, and he had killed him to prevent it. The reason of his not taking more pains to hide the evidences of his guilt was, that he was sure Roby would be convicted. He was near enough to see all that transpired between the youth and the two drovers over the dead body, and he was sure that this unlooked-for circumstance would be the means of drawing all suspicion from himself. But he was sadly mistaken.

And so all evil-doers are very apt to be.

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THE WIDOW AND BISHOP.

A poor widow, encouraged by the famed generosity of an ecclesiastic of great eminence, came into the hall of his palace with her only daughter, a beautiful girl of fifteen years of age. The good divine discerning marks of extraordinary modesty in their demeanor, engaged the widow to tell her wants freely. She, blushing and in tears, told him that she owed five crowns for rent; which her landlord threatened to force her to pay immediately, unless she would consent to the ruin of her child, by compelling her to marry a man whom she detested, and she entreated that the prelate would interpose his sacred authority, till by industry she might be enabled to pay her cruel oppressor. The bishop, moved with admiration of the woman's virtue, bid her be of courage; he immediately wrote a note, and putting it into the hands of the widow, said, "Go to my steward with this paper, and he will give you five crowns to pay your rent." The poor woman, after a thousand thanks to her generous benefactor, hastened to the steward, who immediately presented her with fifty crowns. This she refused to accept; and the steward, unable to prevail on her to take it, agreed to return with her to his master; who, when informed of the circumstance, said, "It is true I made a mistake in writing fifty crowns, and I will rectify it." On which he wrote another note; and turning to the poor woman, whose honesty had a second time brought her before him, said, "So much candor and virtue deserves a recompense; here I have ordered you five hundred crowns; what you can spare of it, lay up as a marriage portion for your daughter."

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A LADIES' CLUB.

It is announced, we perceive, that a Ladies' Club is to be opened in the ensuing season. We are glad to see that the ladies of New York have spirit enough to take up the club in their own defence, and hope they will return, with compound interest, the heavy blow and the great discouragement which clubs have so long inflicted on them. Your married gentleman of fashion will now know what it is to have a partner come home the worse for tea, and perhaps none the better for scandal. We shall willingly contribute any suggestions for arrangements that may occur to us as suitable to this institution. For the accommodation of mammas, a children's room should be attached to it; and in addition to the chicken, lobster-salad, and pastry, constituting the ordinary bill of fare, a sufficiency of rusks, teacakes, and sugar-plums, should be kept constantly on hand. It would be well, also, that a proper quantity of feathers, to burn in case of necessity, as well as an adequate number of bottles of smelling salts, should be accessible on the premises. The Ladies' Club, of course, will take in all the more elegant periodicals; we need hardly say, especially the Ledger. As necessarily will it contain a collection of music, which should include the following new version of a certain popular glee:—"We won't go home till evening—till candles do appear." In short, it should be invested with every inducement to ladies to stay out as late as possible, and enjoy themselves away from the solitary drawing rooms.

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THE WAY TO GET ON IN THE WORLD.

To get on in this world you must be content to be always stopping where you are; to advance you must be stationary; to get up, you must keep down; following riches is like following wild geese, and you must crawl after both on your belly; the minute you pop up your head, off they go whistling before the wind, and you see no more of them. If you haven't the art of sticking by nature, you must acquire it by art; put a couple of pounds of birdlime upon your office stool, and sit down on it; get a chain round your leg and tie yourself to your counter like a pair of shop scissors; nail yourself up against the wall of your place of business like a weazel on a barn-door, or the sign of the spread eagle; or, what will do best of all, marry an honest poor girl without a penny, and my life for yours if you don't do business. Never mind what your relatives say about genius, talent, learning, pushing, enterprise, and such stuff; when they come advising you for your good, stick up to them for the loan of an eagle, and you will never see them on your side of the street again. To do any good, we tell you over and over again, you must be a sticker. You may get fat upon a rock, if you never quit your hold of it.

◆

THE DEATH OF THE BELOVED.

Death is mournful to all of us, and at all times. But when his dread wing has been flapped over those with whom we were linked by the tender ties of love, or associated by the deep feelings of natural affection, how deeply mournful it is! And how mournful and how bitter it is to enter the darkened chamber, and mark the awful change that passed over forms which, perchance, yesterday moved gaily and happily down the great stream of life—to behold the lip, on whose words we lingered, mute and still; the heart, whose beatings were all in unison with our own, motionless and calm; the hand, with whose every touch we were familiar, dull and heavy; the pulse, that swelled in warmth and freedom, throbbing no more; the eye, whose glance had often met our own, glazed and fixed; the smile that once interpreted our slightest wish, departed; the brow cold; the breath choked, and the frame pressed in the mouldering coffin, where the worms will feed upon it, and where the cold, damp earth will rot and decay it.

◆

What is Man?—The man, says Sir Walter Scott, whom I call deserving the name is one whose thoughts and exertions are for others rather than himself—whose high purpose is adopted on just principles and never abandoned while heaven or earth affords means of accomplishing it. He is one who will neither seek an indirect advantage by a specious road, nor take an evil path to gain a real good purpose. Such a man were one for whom a woman's heart should beat constantly while he breathes, and break when he dies.

BUYING A HORSE.

BY ALICE CARY.

I am more and more astonished, the longer I live, at the way men talk around and live around facts, hesitate, quibble and lie. An amusing instance of common procedure in business transactions came to my knowledge lately.

Mr. Brown, a farmer living near the city of ——, was the owner of some half dozen horses—one of which he was specially anxious to sell, and Mr. Smith, a resident of ——, was specially desirous of purchasing said animal. He was well advised of the good points of the horse and predetermined to buy him, no matter at what price he might be held by his owner.

Mr. Brown, meantime, knew that Mr. Smith wanted to buy the horse, and would probably pay more than his fair value; nevertheless, weeks and months went by, and Mrs. Brown said repeatedly that Brown's *critters* were eating their own heads off; and Mr. Brown answered, "Well, what can I do? sell them at auction, and get half their worth?" and Mrs. Smith said as often, "Much good our carriage does us without a horse; I could find one, I know," and Mr. Smith replied that he wished *he* could.

At last matters came to such a pass in the two families that the sale and purchase could be deferred no longer, and at this juncture a happy expedient was hit upon by both parties—they would contrive a meeting which should seem accidental. Accordingly Mr. Brown mounted his fine grey, and proceeded to the Agricultural Fair, where he thought it not unlikely he should meet Mr. Smith, who at the same time influenced by no motive under the sun but the hope of buying Mr. Brown's horse, set out for the same place. Both were advancing in hot haste, each intent on seeing the other, when they met.

"Ah, Mr. Brown, how d'ye do?" said Mr. Smith, assuming a look of astonishment. "You are the last man I expected to see here!"

"Well, I may say the same of you," replied Mr. Brown; "I'd as soon have thought of seeing you at the end of the earth—how did you happen to get here?"

"Well, I hardly know—I had no particular object—that's certain. How are all your folks?"

"Tolerable well, thank ye, how are yours?"

There followed a long conversation on the various ailments of children, in which neither, of course, had one particle of interest.

"I think," said Mr. Smith, at length, changing the subject, "the wind is veering round to the East."

"Yes," said Brown, "I should not wonder if we had rain." Smith thought rain was more likely to fall when the wind was southerly. "I hope it won't rain," he said, looking at the sky instead of at Brown's horse; "it would make it unpleasant for the folks at the Fair, especially for the ladies."

"Yes," replied Brown, "it would be disagreeable, especially to the ladies."

Here both made long recitals of storms which they remembered to have fallen on like occasions.

"There seem to be some nice cattle here," said Smith—on no account would he mention horses.

"Yes," said Brown, "there's a fine pair of oxen," and he indicated by a gesture the ones referred to.

"Not any stouter, are they, for being so large?" said Smith.

"No, I don't know as they are; but then if you happen to want to sell them for beef cattle, you know, they can't weigh too much."

"Ah, I suppose not."

Everything was talked of that could be seen or thought of—everything but what was uppermost in the thoughts of Mr. Brown and Smith.

"Well, I guess I may as well ride home," said Smith, at last. "It's nearly dinner time." And he wound his watch with the deliberation of a man entirely easy in his mind

"I will go, too," answered Brown, yawning. "By the way, Smith, he added, "can you tell me of any person who has a young horse to sell?—sound, good-tempered, and handsome!"

If Mr. Brown expected Smith to answer that he himself wished to buy just such a horse, he was disappointed, for Smith replied as promptly as if he were speaking the truth, "Why, yes, sir—I have just such a horse to sell as you want."

Brown said he was glad to hear of it—he would ride over and look at him the first leisure day he had. Thus lying, one to the other, Mr. Brown mounted the grey horse which he was impatient to sell, and Mr. Smith impatient to buy.

They had shaken hands to separate, when Smith remarked to Brown, slapping his fine grey on the shoulder, "rather a promising colt this of yours; will make a good *work horse* some day, I should think."

Mr. Brown understood the affected appreciation, and said he wished he only had half a dozen more just like him, work-horse or not.

Smith replied that he had employed a carman, an excellent judge of horses, to keep on the lookout for him—he, too, wished to buy when he could suit himself, and he would give the fellow a commission from Brown.

While these pretences were going on the sun went down, but by degrees their circumlocutions narrowed to the point of interest, and about ten o'clock, Mr. Brown having affirmed twenty times that he would not sell his grey horse at any price, and Smith having affirmed as often that he would not pay a hundred dollars for him, even if he suited him, which he did not in one single respect, the bargain was effected, Mr. Smith paying three hundred dollars for the horse.

"Its twice as much as he is worth, and you know it, Brown." said Smith, as they separated.

"It is not half his worth," replied Brown, as he pocketed the money. "I am sorry I let him go."

When they reached their homes, Mr. Smith told his wife that he had bought Brown's splendid grey horse for half price, and Mr. Brown congratulated his better-half on having sold the same animal for twice his value!

◆

How to Prize Good Fortune.—In the year preceding the French revolution, a servant girl in Paris had the good fortune to gain a prize of thirty thousand francs in the lottery. She immediately waited on the parish priest, and generously put two hundred louis d'ors into his hands for the relief of the most indigent and industrious poor in the district; accompanying the donation with this admirable and just observation, "Fortune could only have been kind to me, in order that I might be kind to others."

◆

Getting Through the Legislature.—"Well, Squire," said a constituent to a representative, "Why didn't you get your petition through the Legislature this winter?" "I *did* get it through, my dear sir, without any difficulty." "Ah, indeed; I didn't see any account of it in the newspapers." "To be sure not—*I carried it through both Houses in my pocket, and made no noise about it.*"

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ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

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A LOCAL PICTURE.

One of the most pitiable and painful sights in this city, is the thousand and one bare-footed, filthy and ragged children, plying old brooms at the street-crossings in all stormy weather. Running among the omnibusses and carriages, they perform the better part of what street-cleaning is done—to the shame of our authorities be it said—and their remuneration consists of the few pennies pedestrians drop in their palms. Hundreds of these young female unfortunates may be counted in New York on any rainy day—for they are chiefly girls, most of them under ten years of age, but many of them twelve, fourteen, and still older. Yet, they have boy associates enough to educate them in all the vulgarity and viciousness of their sex, and between their own depravity, ingrained in them by a life, almost from infancy, in the streets, and that caught from their male companions, they present a picture of debasement which might delight a fiend bent on the annihilation of humanity.

Low slang, obscenity, and blasphemy of the coarsest kind, is their current language from morning till night. Any good citizen, or Christian, passing down Broadway, if he is not in such haste to reach Wall-street that he can neither see nor hear beyond his ruling thought, money-making, may stop at any hour of a stormy day and be convinced that we do not exaggerate. When the night comes, these children scatter to their haunts —where? Some to homes as filthy as the streets they have been sweeping, where drunken fathers and mothers eagerly seizie the earnings of their children's sin and shame to prolong their beastly orgies; but many of them, already reckless of home, seek dens of vice.

The grand result is a hideous and loathsome humor on the rising generation, which spreads itself far wider and deeper, by contact and example, than appears on the surface. Other children, not yet driven by brutal parents, nor by want or depraved instinct, to herd with the street-sweepers, learn to imitate their slang, and are soon led into their grossest vices. There are plenty of full-grown brutes in the shape of men, who may be found in the haunts resorted to by these girls, and who encourage them by every art in their life of deformity. The details which any missionary might pick up in one day and night would be too shocking to repeat. Not one in the thousand of our population has the smallest conception of the disgusting scenes enacted by these deformed images of God in this great city.

Yet, little is done to cure or stay this plague. The press, busied dissecting some individual pimples of crime, overlook the vast rotten sub-surface of society. They can excorrate this man, or woman, ripened in iniquity, and caught in some crowning act, but they cannot see the legion of "budding candidates" for the penitentiary and the prison. Benevolent citizens, who wonder at the bloated police records, pass these children daily, but their hands, hearts and eyes, are so centred in their pockets that they see nothing wrong. Good clergymen, tract-distributors, and leaders of moral reform "societies," also witness the sad picture, but the pulpits and "Quarterly Reports" have plenty to do with distant heathen and domestic infidels. There is not another city in the world where such a class of children are permitted to exist. Nor would they exist here, if our authorities would cease their plundering for a moment and clean our streets; or, if our "better class," so-called, of citizens, could obtain a brief rescript from their money-getting madness, and see that their neglect of these young social lepers is a great moral and social crime. In God's name let something be done—broad and effectual—or let us have less talk about heathen, missionary societies, and moral reform. Let the authorities—whose proper business it is—look to it. If these children are driven to this toil for a living, let there be built for them a house of refuge, where they may have respectable employment, and thus be kept from filth, disease, profanity, and every imaginable debasement.

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SCIENCE AGAINST CRIME.

Since our Federal Courts have begun to send the rogues and swindlers of Europe who seek refuge in America back to the merciless clutches of British and Continental law, it is probable that we shall have fewer visits from these wealthy and enterprizing gentlemen. When the Atlantic telegraph gets in operation, the surest way for a trans-Atlantic felon to run into the meshes of the law will be to take passage for this hemisphere; as, in that case, a full description of his person and the name of the vessel on which he embarked can be sent on many days in advance of his arrival, and the police thereby be enabled to make ample arrangements for his detection. The fact is, science is bearing very hard on roguery; and, according to the present rate of progress, the time will soon come when villainy will succumb to chemistry, steam and lightning—if enough honest men can be found to work these three agencies properly. A well directed streak of lightning can head off any rogue, however adroit he may be; and chemistry can lay bare the most hidden means with which the detected murderer seeks to cover over his crime, and even extract from the corpse of the poisoned victim the most fatal evidences of guilt

"A POOR PEASANT YOUTH."

How many fancy that fame is the natural fruitage of superior birth, education, and surroundings. Yet it is true that more stars "peculiarly bright," have arisen from the mist of obscure birth and scanty condition, to flame athwart the page of human history, than ever sprang from the cradles of opulence and power. We felt this truth but just now, as a verse of Robert Burns passed under our eye. Obscure of birth enough, and sadly surrounded, was he in the beginning—and, for that matter, to the end of his life—and yet, whose name and fame have flown wider, or beam brighter than his? What a remarkable renown to have been achieved by a "poor peasant youth," in a land sterile and rugged as his muse is mellow and gentle, or fierce and disdainful, by turns. Unschooled and almost unkempt, how this Ayrshire ploughboy learned to rival Apollo! How he learned to scathe, and yet command the respect and homage of princes and lords. How he learned to pour into the hearts and souls of toiling millions those matchless songs, vibrant with simplicity, truth, honor and patriotism—and those immortal strains of the purest love, which have rejoiced the wide ranks of "common men," and made them prouder in their poverty and rugged independence, than luxury-sated kings.

Many a poet is admired, yet not beloved. Few poets of great fame, are loved equal to their fame. Burns sits crowned and sceptred among the master poets, yet the love for the bard exceeds, if possible, the admiration for his song. God gave him inspiration, and gave with it the nobility of manhood. It was this that tempered his strain—this that pervaded his song and his life, and made both memorable and beloved, for all time. He sang of simple themes—his country, his people, his experiences, his loves, his sorrows—but truth gave grandeur to his song. Men *felt* it, and when he sang—

> "The rank is but the guinea's stamp,
> The man's the gold for all that,"

he struck more fetters from age-bound servility, than an army of warriors could have broken. It was the truth, the simple, direct truth, warmed by patriotic, manly pride, or softened by manly tenderness and sympathy, that sent his song home to millions of hearts, and gave it wonderful power.

Standing on the pastoral shores of the swift and clamorous Doon, one is not surprised at the birth of poets there. It is a wild, romantic scene. Here, the verdure slopes away, greener and softer than the velvet of Genoa; there, glides or rushes the bright river, itself singing a perpetual song; away there, stretch the witch-haunted meadows, Elm-shaded, while yonder gleams the near ocean, one solitary crag of its shore crowned with the ruins of a castle, and the deep bass of its waves sounding anthems forever. Burns was born amid mighty voices of song, but his soul sent up a strain from the obscurity of his native glen, which has borne his name over lands and seas, and fixed his fame more permanent, and grander far, than theirs who sleep beneath the pyramids.

◆

HEROES OF THE SEA.

The landsman, snug by his cottage hearth and cheerful fire, but little appreciates the heroism of the brave sons of the sea—and the merchant, amid the wares of his stately stores, or luxuriously reclining on soft cushions in his palatial mansion, may query the safety of the ships bearing his commerce, when he hears the winds howl and the storms beat, but it is doubtful if even he thinks as much of the hardy mariner, who is reefing his sails in the storm, or perchance cutting away masts to save his ship—or it may be, clinging to some frail boat or raft, or going down with the wreck to an ocean grave, far from the land and from his beloved. Who can over-estimate the heroism of a commander of a ship, or the sailor at his rope, who stands upon the storm-tossed wreck, refusing—as has often been the case—to save his own life while another life was in peril.

Probably no industrial class suffer so much, with so much bravery and so little selfishness and complaint, as the sailor men—the heroes of the sea. Now and then they prove recreants and cowards, but in the main their courage and endurance are greater than the warrior displays of the battle field. The sailor's struggle is with the elements: wind and wave seek to overwhelm him in his loneliness, far from succor—beyond the roar of the signal gun, the glare of the rocket, and the cry of despair Were it not that a just and good God watches over him, and notes his heroism—if men do not—the life of the sailor would seem a goalless sacrifice. What would the nations become were he to refuse the peril—were this bronzed sailor to refuse to tread the deck, and climb the shrouds, where death rides mocking him in every gale? They would be shorn of their commerce—the products of the earth would dwindle—human industry and enterprise would stagnate—civilization would lapse into barbarism. The sailor's sufferings and perils rear the world's proudest monuments. Honor, then, to the Heroes of the Sea.

◆

THE MORMONS.

By a shameful direlection on the part of the Federal Government, that lecherous and leprous body-politic, known as the "Utah Saints," have been permitted to culminate their iniquities, and, in the face of Christian morality and the highest interests of this Republic, insolently and triumphantly to defy our supreme legislature and executive; until now, it is almost, if not quite impossible, to find a civilian or a soldier, willing to serve the government in the perilous attempt to break up this seething nest of debauchery. We say perilous attempt, for such it eminently will be. Banded with the Indian tribes, in a most venomous hostility to whoever may interfere with their orgies, thousands and tens of thousands of these unparalleled polluters of humanity, are prepared—remote from our civilization and repressive resources—to play soldier or assassin, as the need may be, in defence of their infernal organization. They laugh every intimation of change in their political and social career, to scorn. Virtually, they utterly ignore our national Government—bend or break its civil officers sent among them—flout its military arm—rob its mails, and bring its course and influence, everywhere among the reflecting, into painful contempt. Polygamy, as practiced by the effeminate races of the East, would be tolerable compared with the indecencies of the Mormons. Yet their polygamy is become but a fraction of the sum of their villanies. Utterly lawless, beyond the obedience of the rank and file to their leaders, and to their own sensual lusts, the "Utah Saints" are, beyond question, the foulest population of the civilized world. It would be a blessing to mankind, if the fiery rain that fell on Sodom, would suddenly sweep them from the earth, forever!

◆

Declaimers Against the World.—They declaim most against the world who have most sinned against it; as people generally abuse those whom they have injured.

FRESH FERN LEAVES.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1855, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

A WORD TO SHOP-KEEPERS.

In one respect—nay in more, if so please you, I am unfeminine. I detest shopping. I feel anything but affection for Eve every time I am forced to do it. But we must be clean and whole, even in this dirt-begrimed, lawless city; where ash barrels and ash boxes, with spikes of protruding nails for the unwary, stand on every sidewalk, waiting the bidding of balmy zephyrs to sift their dusky contents on our luckless clothes. All the better for shop-keepers; indeed, I am not at all sure, that they and the street-cleaning gentry do not, as doctors and druggists are said to do, play into each other's hands!

Apart from my natural and never-to-be-uprooted dislike to the little feminine recreation of shopping, is the pain I experience whenever I am forced to take part in it, at the snubbing system practiced by too many shopkeepers towards those whose necessities demand a frugal outlay. Any frivolous female fool, be she showily dressed, may turn a whole store-full of goods topsy-turvy at her capricious will, although she may end in taking nothing away, but her own idiotic presence; while a poor, industrious woman, with the hardly-earned dollar in her calico pocket, may not presume to deliberate, or to differ from the clerk as to its most frugal investment. My blood often boils as I stand side by side with such an one. I, by virtue of better apparel, receiving respectful treatment; she—crimsoning with shame, like some guilty thing, at the rude reply.

Now, gentlemen, imagine yourselves in this woman's place. *I* have no need to do so, because I have stood there. Imagine her with her fatherless, hungry children by her side, plying the needle late into the night, for the pitiful sum of seventy-five cents a week, as I once did. Imagine her, with this discouraging price of her eye-sight and strength, creeping forth with her little child by the hand, peeping cautiously through the glass windows of stores, to decide unobtrusively upon fabrics and labelled prices, or vainly trying to read human feeling enough in their owners' faces to insure her from contemptuous insult at the smallness and cheapness of her contemplated purchase. At length, with many misgivings, she glides in amid rustling silks and laces, that drape hearts which God made womanly and tender like her own, but which Fashion and Mammon have crushed to ashes in their vice-like clasp; hearts which never knew a sorrow greater than a misfitting dress, or a badly matched ribbon, and whose owners' lips curl as the new-comer holds thoughtfully between her thin fingers the despised fabric, carelessly tossed at her by the impatient clerk.

Oh, how can you speak harshly to such an one? how can you drive the blood from her lip, and bring the tear to her eye? how can you look sneeringly at the little sum she places in your hand, so hardly, *virtuously, bravely* earned?—She has seen you!—See her as she turns away, clasping so tightly that little hand in hers, that the pained child would tearfully ask the reason, were it not prematurely sorrow-trained.

Oh, *you* have never (reversing the order of nature) leaned with a breaking heart upon a little child, for the comfort and sympathy that you found nowhere else in the wide world beside. *You* never wound your arms about her in the silent night, drenching brow, cheek and lip with your tears, as you prayed God in your wild despair, dearly as you loved her, to take her to himself;—for, living, she, too, must drink of the cup that might not pass away from your sorrow-steeped lips.

It is because I have felt all this, that I venture to bespeak your more courteous treatment for these my unfortunate sisters who can only weep for themselves. Fanny Fern.

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AN INIQUITOUS SYSTEM.

When a person who has been assaulted, robbed, or otherwise wronged, complains of the wrong-doer, it is the practice of the courts to imprison the sufferer, in order to keep him as a witness against the offender, unless he can give the requisite bail as security that he will appear at the trial to give testimony against the prisoner. It often happens that the victim of outrage—perhaps some friendless girl—is too poor to give the necessary bail, in which case he or she must lie in jail for months and months, while the villain who has committed the crime, having money, and friends to act as his bail, is permitted to roam at large and enjoy the balmy breath of the heavens from which the wronged one is cruelly shut out. This is an enormous outrage, and calls loudly for amendment. It defeats the aim of the law and makes a mockery of justice. It enables wealthy villains to oppress and ill-treat the helpless poor with utter impunity. We know of a case wherein a brutal man knocked down and kicked a poor widow woman so as to endanger her life; she prosecuted him, he was held for trial on $2,000 bail which he easily procured; she was held to bail in a smaller sum to appear at the trial as a witness, and not being able to get it, was thrown into prison, and her children being thus left without any means of support, and the trial being put off from month to month, her family was broken up, her children were sent to the alms-house, and when she was at last released, she found her home desolate, and herself broken in health and dying from disease superinduced by her long confinement. Is it not time that this iniquitous system was abolished?

◆

MANIFEST DESTINY

Will Central America be annexed to this Republic? is a question which is much discussed in all quarters now-a-days, and one which is of no small interest to the thoughtful mind. Judging of the future by the past—which Patrick Henry said was the only way to judge of it—we should say that Central America will soon be ours. The ineradicable instinct of the race—or races—of which we come is to grab everything within their reach, and go in search of what lies beyond it. This is the truth, and there is no use attempting to gainsay it. The Central Americans must either exterminate us, or we shall "absorb" them. It would be a tyrannical outrage to be sure, but it will be done, nevertheless.

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Reversing the Order.—We observe that the newspapers are getting in the habit of yielding one great point in Woman's "Bill of Rights," namely, the independent and precedent mention of the wife when she and her husband are named in the same paragraph. For example: "Mrs. General Montera and her gallant husband yesterday paid their respects to the President;"—"Among other distinguished persons present we noticed the fascinating Mrs. Dr Delmaintenon and her learned husband," &c., &c. For our part, we rather like this impertinence, and we hope the "gallant" and "learned" husbands relish it also.

THE DRUNKARD'S CHILD.

BY C. D. STUART.

In the crowded street I met her,
Just as twilight vailed the sky,
Never, never to forget her,
And the tear-drops in her eye.

Fair as summer's fairest blossom,
Played the curles upon her brow,'
While beneath them heaved a bosom
Whose deep anguish thrills me now.

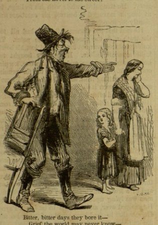
"Father, father!" spake she mildly,
"Mother prayed you would not stay:"
"Father, father!" cried she wildly,
"Come, oh, come with me away."

"Hush thy tongue!" the father uttered—
For the dram-shop door was nigh—
And her heart with terror fluttered,
As he bade her homeward fly.

Sad, and faint, and broken-hearted,
Turned that little child away
To the home from whence she started,
Where her starving mother lay.

All that night, with grief and sorrow
Watched they, prayed they—hoped in vain!
Till the day-dawn of the morrow
Brought the drunkard home again.

Sore and cross, the wretch beheld them
Wanting e'en a crust to eat;
Like two beasts the fiend expelled them
From the hovel to the street!



Bitter, bitter days they bore it—
Grief the world may never know—
Till the bier, with sable o'er it,
Eased their burden here below.

Side by side the two are sleeping—
Faded stalk and withered rose!
'Neath the silent willow—weeping
O'er the grave of many woes.

O, my God! is this a story—
Or a sight for every day?
This a part of human glory—
Let the tongue of ages say!

What of courts, and what of battles,
What of deeds beyond the wave,
When around our hearth-sides rattles
All this pageant of the grave?

Dim the eyes and cold the embers,
Pale the cheek and dark the sky,
And what joy the soul remembers
Gives to grief a darker dye.

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SERVANT GIRLS.

There is an unusual outcry at this time, in the principal cities of the Northern and Eastern States, in regard to the impositions and selfishness of domestic servants. "Servant girls don't seem to care about anything but to get as high wages and do as little work as they can," is constantly repeated, as though the fact it chronicles were a heinous crime, for which servant girls should be summarily dealt with. But why should servant girls care for anything else? Does anybody care for them? Which of their employers does not seek, on a much larger scale, to get the largest returns from the smallest outlay?

The truth is, the principles of humanity are too inoperative in all intercourse between employers and servants. The servant is a drudge—too often an uneducated and superstitious drudge, who experiences nought but hardships in her employer's family, and never receives a single encouraging or affectionate word from one of its members. If she is taken sick, she is driven off to a hospital; if she makes a blunder, she is scolded and threatened; if she achieves a triumph in domestic labor, she is *not* greeted with applause; should she wear herself out in the service of a family, would she be pensioned? or receive any protection whatever from those for whom she had sacrificed herself?

While such a state of things continues, who can expect servants to "form attachments" for their employers' families, or care for anything but *high* wages and *light* service?

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AN IMPORTANT SUGGESTION.

In selecting places for Summer resort, people should not forget that important institution—The News-Office. Not to be able to get the daily papers every morning, and the Ledger every week with unfailing regularity, is an affliction which few intelligent citizens or citizenesses of this Republic could bear without a murmur. In fact, in the estimation of three persons out of five it would render the otherwise most seductive retreat intolerable. To be deprived of one's favorite paper at the accustomed hour of its perusal is of itself sufficiently annoying; but to think that while you are thus mourning its loss, others, who had the foresight to pitch their Summer tents within the protecting contiguity of a News-Office, are at that very moment extatically reading its well known and beloved pages, is more than the best quality of human nature can bear. Be careful, therefore, when making inquiries concerning your Summer retreats, to inquire particularly about the News-Office.

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THE FALL OF THE HOOP.

Hoops are collapsing, and Broadway is sensibly relieved. These locomotive ring-around-isms no longer push us from our path, and a modest man once more stands a chance of seeing his feet in an omnibus. The consequence of this "hauling in" on the part of the hoops is most happy for the fair sex. Women are great gainers by the change. They no longer look like animated busts perched on the tops of perambulating haystacks, but like the glorious creatures we used to encounter in the ante-hoop periods of the race. We now have the swaying grace of the bewildering robe, instead of the fixed and *pokey* dress unnaturally distended by a foreign substance which never had the slightest business to be there We therefore hail this change for the better, and hope it will last as long as our respect and admiration for Woman shall make us uncomfortable on witnessing her arrayed in an absurd fashion.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—BY GEO. D. PRENTICE, ESQ., OF THE LOUISVILLE JOURNAL.

General Jackson bequeathed a gold snuff box to the man who should be adjudged by his countrymen, or by the ladies, to be the bravest soldier in the battle fields of his country. With a vast deal of respect for Gen. Jackson, and a world of regard for the ladies, we really cannot think that the latter are very well qualified to decide upon the comparative bravery of soldiers in battles they do not see. Unquestionably the ladies can better decide who is most gal*lant* than who is most *gal*lant.

A man was asked why his beard was black while his hair was white. "Because," said he, "my beard is twenty years younger than my hair." Another inquired why his own hair was black while his beard was gray. "Because," said his friend, "your jaws have done more hard work than your brains."

A candidate in Alabama was beaten in a late popular election, and the next day he got into a quarrel upon the subject, and was knocked down with a large pole used for supporting peas. He was first knocked down by the people and then by the pea-pole.

It has been said that almost the only man who never "underrates" anybody is the assessor of taxes, and it may be added, that the only occasion when a man is disposed to underrate himself is when the assessor pays him a visit.

It seems strange that a great many men grow avaricious as they grow old—that they multiply their attachments to the earth just as they are about to run away from it, thus increasing the bitterness without protracting the date of their separation.

The ambition to be witty sometimes overcomes even a youth's filial affection. "John," said a father to his son, on the day he was twenty-one, "you have got a fool for your master now." "Yes," said John, "and have had these twenty years."

We have not examined very nicely the merits of the recent quarrel and fight between Great Britain and China, but we believe, that, in the famous opium war, the British undertook to butcher one half of the Chinese for the privilege of poisoning the rest.

It seems to us that most of the professed connoisseurs of paintings have a blind reverence for whatever is old. They are Antinomian in their critical creed—substituting faith for *good works*.

Fleas must be long-lived. The "industrious fleas," that were taken through the country fifteen years ago, are advertised as having gone to Cape Cod. They will have to be "industrious" there, or they will starve to death.

Somebody truly says that one debt begets another. If a man owes you a dollar, he is sure to owe you a grudge, too, and he is generally more ready to pay interest on the latter than on the former.

A St. Louis paper says of a late gunpowder explosion in that city that it was "sudden." Gunpowder explosions generally are. Powder, if at all good, ignites much more readily than ordinary fuels.

In some parts of California trees are scarce, and hangings very numerous. A tree without two or three men hanging on it is quite a rare spectacle. Such a tree is not considered a good bearer.

A Western editor boasts that his State furnishes a greater quantity of oats than any other in the Union. He forgets to say whether she also furnishes a greater number of asses to eat them.

It has been thought strange that a dinner to which a man is not invited, sometimes sits exceedingly hard upon his stomach.

An editor in Michigan talking of corn, professes to have a couple of ears fifteen inches long. Some folks are remarkable for the length of their two ears.

Scott says that "every man that lives has his lights and shades." We are not so certain about the shades, but we presume there is no liver without lights.

The son of Mr. Henry S. Gunn, of Mississippi, ran off two weeks ago with his father's second wife. The young "son of a gun" has not been heard of since.

With fools argument is passion and vociferation; with politicians it is a majority; with kings it is the sword; with men of sense it is a sound reason.

Many writers derive all their inspiration from the writings of their fellow men, having no thought except as to the best mode of stealing the thoughts of others.

In Columbia, a week or two since, a man whistled to his neighbor as if calling a dog. He got soundly whipped for it. That was "paying dear for the whistle."

One political editor advises another to wash his mouth with soap. Some of these politicians, it is to be feared, have *lie* enough in their mouths already.

The mantle of a bad man should always be buried with him, for fear it might chance to fall on somebody.

Men should not think too much of themselves, and yet a man should always be careful not to forget himself!

Some men seem to have no consciences, and others a score apiece; a separate one for every occasion.

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CURRENT ITEMS.

A chemist in France announces that he has discovered a poisonous element in wheat, and that it is contained in the husks or bran of the grain. From this fact the chemist argues that coarse or unbolted flour is less healthy and nutritious than the finer brands from which the matter containing the poisonous qualites is completely sifted. This theory seems based on a good foundation, but after all, nature may have supplied that "poisonous element" in wheat because said element is necessary to render the grain a proper and nutritious article of food. Many vegetables that contain more or less latent poison, are constantly used for food.

The "Coosa Advertiser" gives an account of the swallowing of a frog by a small snake which is a little ahead of anything in the gastronomyc line we have lately heard of. The frog was of goodly size and the snake was small; but after two days of persevering effort, the latter swallowed the former *still alive*—the frog's form being plainly marked in the snake's distended body. The reptile was then killed, and cut open to release the frog, *which at once hopped away:*

A snake over three feet long was recently discovered winding his way along the gutter of Duane street in this city. Quite a crowd assembled to watch his progress, which was at last staid by a physician who killed the reptile and carried it off to adorn his cabinet. No one could account for the presence of his snakeship in that locality, and his actions showed that he was a total stranger to the city.

As a lady dressed in the height and circumference of fashion was stepping from the cars at Napoleon, Indiana, a short time since, her dress caught on the step, and the train suddenly getting under way, she was dragged some thirty rods before her hoop gave way. Fortunately she was not seriously injured, though it was a miraculous escape from a horrid death.

The Savannah (Ga) Republican says that the bark "William and Anne," which carried General Wolfe and staff to Quebec in 1759, recently arrived in that port, in good condition, from Barcelona in Spain She was built more than a hundred years ago, and is the oldest vessel on the Atlantic.

The Arch-Duke Constantine of Russia has astonished the Parisians by exhibiting far more interest in workshops and mechanics than in court shows and pretty women. It should be remembered, however, that he is a direct descendant of Peter the Great, who was himself accustomed to handle the saw and chisel.

A little boy, seven years of age, named Adolphe Rubenstein, living in Grand street, was bitten a few days since, while playing in front of his father's door, by a small dog which was supposed to be mad. This is the fifth case of the kind which has occurred in this city within a few weeks.

As a little daughter of Wm. Cole, of Middletown, Pa., was playing near the well in the yard, a short time since, she climbed upon the curb in sport, but losing her balance she was precipitated into the depths, and, before she could be extricated, was drowned.

The Mobile Tribune says that on Saturday last three mad dogs appeared in that city, and succeeded in biting two mules, one horse, and a negro before they were apprehended.

A Russian war ship of 4,000 tons burthen, three hundred and twenty feet long and fifty-two feet in breadth of beam, is being built in this city.

There are quantities of counterfeit new-cent pieces already in circulation. People must look closely at the new coin.

The Georgian says that three gentlemen in Savannah won $3,800, in bets, by the acquittal of Mrs. Cunningham in the New York murder case.

Hay is selling in Northern Illinois, and in Iowa, at from $60 to $70 a ton.

"IN THE MORNING SOW THY SEED."

BY MRS. L. H. SIGOURNEY.

Yes—sow your seed at morning,
Before advancing day
Comes in its plenitude of power
To bear your hopes away—
Before the quickly-rooted weeds,
That ask no culture's toil,
Spring up, and with their mushroom growth
Usurp the yielding soil.

Yes—sow good seed at morning,
Because the world is strong
To set in dark array the plants
Of violence and wrong—
Thorns hath it too, and brambles,
And tares that mock the trust,
And Sodom's apples only fill'd
With bitterness and dust.

Seed sowers! ye are blessed—
A glorious right ye hold,
A kingly power the immortal sound
Like plastic wax to mould—
Come forth, before the sparkle
Of the first dew is dry,
And train Heaven's angelic bowers,
That which can never die.

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THE WIDOW OF TOLEDO.

A TALE OF

"LOW BIRTH AND IRON FORTUNE."

BY DR. S. P. BRONSON.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1857, by ROBERT BONNER, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.

CHAPTER XVII.

SHOWING HOW LEON, WITHOUT SEEKING IT, OBTAINED A GOLDEN KISS FROM FORTUNE.

After a journey of about two miles, the robber chief halted at the entrance of a small wood, and taking a handkerchief from a side pocket, roughly called to his prisoner to approach.

The widow, perceiving that she was to be blindfolded, complied, and, together with Sancho, whose eyes were already useless from terror, yielding the bridle to her captor, she was led through the wood, and down a narrow, precipitous descent, when the party paused for a time and then again moved on. The change in the air informed the widow that she was passing through a cave or court yard; she could not decide which. She was soon satisfied upon this point, however, by feeling the rude hand of the conductor upon the bandage, which he withdrew from her eyes, when, looking around, she found herself in a vast cave, which was fully lit up by torches or burners stationed at irregular distances; some hanging by chains from points where the jagged roof was low enough to admit of it, others fastened to natural pillars, and still others to upright posts erected for that purpose.

The cave evidently had many natural apartments; for the widow detected, as from afar off, the smell of stables, and also that arising from the preparation of food. The apartment in which she now found herself was large, nearly circular in form, and contained besides a large round table in the centre, an immense number of hampers, chests and boxes, together with bundles of cloths, from the interstices between which loomed up here and there a brightly burning torch, whose lambent flame served to relieve the darkness of its depth. The rocky floor was deadened to sound by a thick layer of some soft bark-like substance, which again was overlaid with a thick carpeting of sand, which in its turn was covered with a second spread of finely broken bark, that rendered the walking at once soft and firm to the foot, while it awoke no echo

"Rude quarters, these!" remarked the brigand chief, with his usual laugh. "But they answer well enough for the rough hearts that inhabit them. Your dainty limbs, however, senor, accustomed doubtless to the luxury and elegance of the city, may shrink from the poor accommodations they offer!"

"I have been trained to take the world as I find it!" returned the widow.

"A cautious reply!" said the brigand, with a sneering smile. "The nurselings of rank and wealth are proverbial for such. Why not be a man, and boldly say at once that you would rather be at home!"

"It is unnecessary," said the widow. "For surely no one in his senses would be supposed to prefer restraint to freedom, and a robber's den to the polite circles of society!"

"I presume not," said the chief. "But how comes it you are so much bolder in tongue than in nerve? You displayed no courage in your capture!"

"What could one man's struggles do against twenty armed ruffians?"

"And yet," said the chief, "it availed him that fled, who deserved his freedom for his courage!"

"Your comrades did not think so when they sent a shower of bullets to punish him for the effort!" observed the widow, drily.

"And yet they permitted him to escape; nobly restraining themselves from firing at him a second time!"

"Yes," said the widow, "he escaped—thanks to the fleet hoofs of his steed! The poor courier, however, did not fare so well. His courage was also appreciated by a bullet; the only difference being, that in his case the one ball was more successful than the shower!"

"You are witty, senor, and more witty than courageous! But, no matter. You must honor us with your company for a time You may not find us very congenial, for we are rude, rough fellows, and stand not upon ceremony; but the length of your stay will depend entirely upon yourself—or rather, upon your friends, who may or may not want you back. In the former event, they will pay liberally for your ransom; in the latter, they will give nothing for you, and we shall be compelled to knock you on the head. We are frank, you see!"

"At what sum do you rate my ransom?" demanded the widow.

"For one of your apparent rank, two thousand pistoles."

"Give me pen, ink and paper," said the widow.

The chief turned to his comrades, who were attentively listening, with a low laugh.

The men responded with a well-pleased smile.

"Holloa! young gentleman," continued the leader, "two thousand is only a mere trifle to you—eh? Ha! ha! I only threw it out as a feeler. We must positively put your ransom up to five thousand pistoles!"

"Pen, ink and paper, then," repeated the widow "Anything to free me from this place!"

"Ha! comrades—did you hear that?" cried the chief. "Shall we suffer such a sneer at our brave mountain home to pass unheeded—particularly when it includes ourselves?"

"Cut him down—pitch him over the precipice—hew him in pieces!" was the varied response.

The widow started and put her hand upon her sword.

"No," laughed the chief, "we'll do better than that. We'll double the amount of his ransom!"

This proposal was received with a general shout.

"Unless," added the chief, with a coarse wink, "the gentleman desires to take a few more at the same price—which, of course, he is at liberty to do! Hey, comrades?"

"As many as he pleases, and the more the better!" cried the ruffians, with a boisterous roar.

"How many will it please the gentleman to go?" asked the chief, with a mocking smile.

"Pen, ink and paper!" answered the widow, with dignity. "Rise, sirrah!" she added, to Sancho, who was white with terror

"The gentleman appears to have had enough!" observed the captain. "And by St. Dominick! I do not blame him; for five thousand pistoles is pretty high for a remark. A few such luxuries would make a hole in the purse of the king himself. Walk this way to the table, senor, and indite the precious epistle, which your boy, here, can carry."

Sancho began to breathe easier. He felt that he, at least, would soon be free from the power of the horrid wretches.

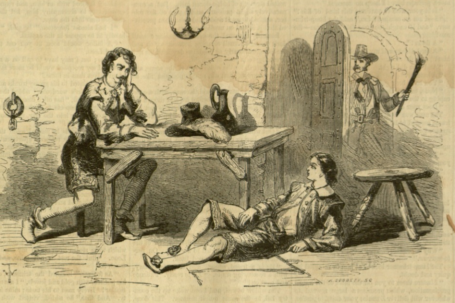
The order was soon written. It was directed to the lady's banker, and was simply signed "De la Montera."

"Tell him all," said the widow to the fat boy. "He will understand why I have omitted the first part of my name," she added to herself.

Sancho kissed the hand of his mistress, and promising to return as speedily as possible, retired from the cave, led by the chief and one of his men, who took the precaution of bandaging his eyes till he had returned to the road.

On the removal of the bandage, Sancho perceived that his mule had been restored to him.

"I will give you four days and one hour in which to accomplish your journey," said the brigand chief. "If you are not here at the expiration of that time, your master's life shall pay the forfeit of your negligence."



THE CELL IN THE BANDITS' CAVE.

"I will be here, senor," said the boy.

"See that you fail not. And, another thing for your memory: if you play any tricks upon us, or attempt to betray us in any manner, I will come in person to Toledo, and after cutting off your ears, drown you in the Tagus."

"I will be careful," chattered Sancho, whose cheeks were white as a sheet.

"Off with you, then."

Sancho did not wait to hear this order repeated. Turning the mule's head towards Toledo, he, the next moment, was riding like one who has a proper respect for his skin.

"What have you there?" demanded the brigand chief of one of his men, who was awaiting his return at the mouth of the cave.

"Some papers found in the doublet of the courier, your honor."

The chief ran his eyes over them, and became thoughtful.

"I fear we have been too hasty," he said to the man. "He was no courier, but a powerful personage in disguise. It was no other than the father of my old friend, Don Juan de Mendoza!"

"The minister of justice?"

"The same. But no matter, he has no sons to avenge him; and as to the State—bah! it avenges nobody."

With these words, the chief returned to the widow, and observed—

"There are some papers found upon the courier, which are of no service to me, but may be to his heirs. Possibly you may know them?"

"What then?" said the widow.

"If so disposed, you may take charge of them."

"I will do so, though I have no acquaintance with them."

"You have a handsome face, senor," said the chief, with a low laugh, "which with your money, doubtless renders you irresistible to the fair?"

The widow frowned and turned haughtily away.

The brigand, half sitting, half leaning on the table, with his right foot swinging to and fro in the air, laughingly followed her with his eyes.

"You remind me," he continued, as though he took a malicious delight in insulting his captive, "you remind me by your airs of a fiery young springal whom we took some eight days ago, and whom, together with his attendant, we now have under lock and key. You are nearly as good-looking, but not so courageous. For, whereas you cost me nothing—not even so much as a scratch, *he* cut to pieces three of my best men. I'll wager, now, a hundred pistoles, that in love as in war, he would send you to the wall!"

"I have no desire to enter the list with him," said the widow, with an indifference that she did not feel; for she fancied whom the fiery young springal and his attendant possibly might be.

"I presume not!" said the chief, with a sneer. "Nor with any one else of good mettle."

"Do you think it brave or manly to thus insult your prisoners?" demanded the widow, with dignity. "Or do you take this course with me because you fancy that I will not dare to resent it?"

"Bah!" answered the chief, "you would not dare to resent a blow from a child!"

"In that case, why do *you* forget your manhood so far as to outrage one whom you know will not call your baseness to account? In the circles in which I move such conduct is viewed as infamous. Would you try it upon the young springal that you have alluded to?"

"You are a man with a woman's heart!" said the ruffian, coloring. "When brave men are insulted, they do not stop to reason, but redress themselves with the sword Bah! I could spit upon you!"

"I am your prisoner, and do not look for the consideration of a freeman. Nor do I consider my dignity trespassed upon by anything that one of your stamp can say or do."

"Bah!" said the chief; "you are brave only in the mouth. But were it not for your ransom, I'd pitch you to the vultures. As it is, I shall punish your bravado by locking you up with the young hero I spoke of, who will soon discover your emptiness and teach you the penalty of intruding upon his privacy"

"Why will you be guilty of such cruelty?" demanded the widow. "You have fixed my ransom at a sum which ought to secure me the treatment of a prince. Can you not place me in a cell by myself?"

"It is not my humor!" said the chief. "It would do me good to see one of your breed punished according to your deserts. But it is always the way. Fortune seems to lavish her favors on carpet-knights, and to leave the really brave to fight their way as best they can. You, now, a popinjay, without a particle of merit, can write an order for ten thousand pistoles without a tremor, and a brave man like my hero, has not, if his own account be true, which I doubt not, twenty crowns to his name. By St. Dominick, if I were in dame fortune's seat, I would make you change places: to him, who deserves every thing, I would give all: while you, who deserve nothing, I would starve with a crust!"

"It is well for me that you are not fortune! But if this gallant man has not wherewith to buy his ransom, why do you hold him prisoner?"

"To try if his tale be true. We have many in the course of the year, who solemnly affirm to the same thing; but most of them on discovering that they must pay or die, finally manage to think of some friends that will help them."

"But what if it be found that he has no friends?"

"In that event, which may the saints forfend! for I like the fellow in spite of his slaughter of my men—in that event, I say, he must go the way of all who have no money."

"What do you mean?"

"Over the precipice," said the ruffian. "It is with us as in the world," he added, with a low laugh. "We make short work with the unfortunate! Dead men tell no tales, and we must keep up the spirit of our laws. It has a wholesome moral effect all round."

The widow's blood crept.

"What is the amount of his ransom?" she asked after a brief pause.

"It was at first four thousand pistoles—a thousand for himself and an additional thousand for each of the three that he killed; but as his ability to pay so large a sum lessens day after day, I have finally concluded not to make any charge for the three men."

"So that you hold him for a thousand pistoles?"

"Your education has not been thrown away on you, senor. And as you appear to have money in abundance, would it not be a kindly act to worthily employ a part of it in the redemption of this poor adventurer, whose sword would doubtless be thenceforth at your service? It would be a judicious investment," he insolently added, seeing his interlocutor hesitate, "for your want of courage must subject you to many insults, and it is gratifying to have some one to avenge us!"

The widow disdained to reply to this vulgar taunt, which had no other effect than to make her lips curl with mingled indignation and contempt.

"I will put you together," said the coarse ruffian, with his customary low laugh. "This proud, daring spirit will soon cow you into submission, and, I doubt not, into a glad compliance with my proposal. I will have a couple of blankets put in one corner for you, and you shall be sumptuously provided with black bread and water till your messenger returns. So, my sweet-scented popinjay, follow me."

"I will not!" cried the widow, stepping back and laying her hand upon her rapier. "I will have a cell to myself, or none at all!"

"It is as *I* say here!" cried the robber chief, springing with a swaggering air from the table. Ho, there, Pedro—Guzman—Lissardo!" he shouted to a knot of his companions, who were carelessly reclining on some bales of goods and discussing the incidents of the day; "this carpet-knight is noisy and obstinate. Show him into the cave with the adventurer. If he resists give him a few inches of cold steel."

"Stay!" cried the widow, shrinking from the rude touch of the advancing ruffians. "I will accompany you!"

The robber chief raised his hand, and the men fell back.

"I thought I would bring you to your senses!" he observed, with a low laugh. "Follow me!"

So saying, he caught up a torch and turning off to the right, led the way along a comparatively narrow passage, at the extremity of which appeared a massive door, heavily studded with spike nails. A grating slightly above the centre admitted air, while a sliding panel near the bottom enabled the cook to push in the prisoners' daily allowance of food.

Taking a master key from his belt, the robber chief inserted it in the lock, and giving it a turn, the door swung back on its hinges, and revealed a small low-roofed cave or cell with rough, irregular sides, at the further end of which sat a young man before a rude table, on which he leaned in thought. Stretched on the floor and looking up anxiously at his master, as if trying to read in his face the thoughts passing in his mind, was a young, fair-skinned lad, whose large, mild eyes seemed to mirror a soul whose chief characteristics were affection and fidelity. A lamp hanging from the ceiling threw a dim light upon the scene.

The opening of the door had no other effect upon the prisoners than to induce the young man at the table to tranquilly turn his eyes in that direction, and the lad to calmly turn his head.

"I have brought you a companion," said the robber chief, rudely pushing the widow in. "Be tender of him; for he is the veriest coward that ever crossed the mountains."

And fastening the door, he turned upon his heel and, with a low, cunning laugh, took his departure.

The widow's heart throbbed with unusual rapidity, and her cheeks glowed on being thrust into the dungeon. She could not at first make out the features of her fellow prisoners; but as, after a few moments, she became more accustomed to the dim, subdued light, she perceived the lad looking up at her with an expression of mingled astonishment and defiance.

Stepping back, with instinctive delicacy, into the corner on the left of the door, she glanced at the young man at the table, whose eyes were considerately cast down, as if to allow the new-comer time and opportunity to collect himself.

The lady was right in the suspicion that had crossed her in the outer cave. Leon and the artless country youth, whom the inn-keeper of the Three Poor Travelers had so enthusiastically described, were before her.

For reasons which will appear hereafter, the lady did not feel kindly towards the youth, nor the youth towards the lady.

As for the ex-secretary, his blood was in a gallop. He had recognized the stranger as she stood beside the robber-chief in the passage, and equally astounded at her costume and her unexpected presence, he was dumb with agitation and wonder. He was besides so ignorant of her sentiments in reference to himself, that he was uncertain whether she would thank him to know her, notwithstanding her disguise; and supposing also that she viewed him simply as a creature of her service, and therefore beneath her notice, he was undecided as to the course he ought to pursue. If he spoke to her, she might regard it as an indignity; and if he remained silent, she might set him down for a clown.

In the meanwhile, the lady herself and the country youth were exchanging a long, settled stare of mutual antipathy and reproach. It was evident that they were not strangers to each other; and also that the country youth was not so artless as he had led the inn-keeper to suppose.

Leon, at length, with the delicacy of a naturally superior mind, concluded that it was his duty as one making pretension to the character of a gentleman to respect the disguise which the lady had seen fit to assume, and to treat her with the deference due to a stranger.

"Will you accept of a seat, senor?" he said, rising. "The accommodations here are but scant, but as you must be weary after passing through the hands of the mountain thieves, to whose varlet-like rudeness I myself can bear witness, it is fit that you regain your strength and self-possession with the best."

"I thank you!" said the widow, acknowledging the courtesy with a bow. "I prefer this jutting-stone, for the present. My servant has gone to the city for my ransom, and I must be content with a prisoner's fare till he returns."

"As you please, senor. But allow me to suggest that this stool is pleasanter than a stone, and I can sit upon the table. Oblige me by taking it," he added, placing the seat before her.

The lady bowed her thanks, and the ex-secretary, to give her confidence, placed himself at ease upon the table.

The boy stole a glance up at his face to discover, if possible, what was passing in his mind. But Leon, from a desire to leave no room for uneasiness in the breast of his late mistress, was upon his guard; and the youth learned nothing.

As the widow evinced no desire to converse, and as the ex-secretary did not wish to intrude upon her thoughts, there was a dead silence for some hours, when the sliding panel was removed, and a loaf of black bread, a pitcher of water, and a small roll, were pushed successively through the aperture.

The youth, at a glance from his master, took up the loaf and the pitcher, and the widow the roll, which, on opening, she discovered to be the promised blankets.

The country-boy cut the bread into three parts, and giving one to the stranger, and another to his master, reserved the third for himself. The frugal meal was dispatched without an unnecessary word, though it was evident that it would have been a relief to all parties to break through the restraint which prevented them from indulging in an interchange of thought.

A lull by-and-bye in the murmur of voices without, satisfied the prisoners that the deep hours of night were upon them; a fact which was soon placed beyond dispute by the heavy snorings which were borne to their ears through the grating.

The ex-secretary glanced significantly at the youth, who thereupon betook himself to the corner on the left of the table, and wrapping a covering around him, was soon to all appearances in a profound sleep.

Leon, perceiving that the widow was still awake, bade her good night, and turning to the corner on the right, was ere long in the land of dreams.

There was no longer any good reason why the widow should not court repose, and looking awhile with thoughtful eyes from one to the other of her companions, she at length carefully enveloped herself in the blankets which had been thrust through the sliding-panel, seated herself on the ground, braced her back against the wall, bowed her head upon her breast, and slept.

Morn came, but not day, for the burner hanging from the roof gave the only light that was permitted to shine in the cell.

When the widow awoke, she found the country lad standing near her, and observing her with an expression that boded her no good.

She sprang to her feet, and was about to speak, when a movement on the part of Leon, who was just awaking, restrained her.

On rising, the ex-secretary bowed good morning to the stranger, and turned awhile up and down the apartment to shake the torpor and stiffness from his limbs.

In the meanwhile his attendant rolled up the blankets, and placed them on the portmanteaus which had served his master and himself for pillows.

The light from the lamp was feeble, and the temples of the ex-secretary were throbbing with the excitement of thought, but neither of these separately, nor both together, were sufficient to prevent the young man while taking his fifth round through the cell, from observing that the eyes of the youth were swollen, and his cheeks unusually pale.

"My poor boy!" he exclaimed, putting his arm around him and drawing him affectionately to his breast, "something ails you! You have had a bad night. Terror, perhaps, unnerved you?"

"No!" answered the boy, with a plaintive sigh. "But," bursting into tears, and hiding his face on the young man's shoulder, "I would we were away from here."

"Courage, brother—courage!" said Leon, patting him gently on the back. "It is a long night that has no morning. Fortune cannot much longer press us; and besides, she is fitful, boy—fitful, and does not frown forever. Let us await her smile with hopeful hearts—and be sure that it will come. Therefore, courage, Paul—courage! Besides, I have a thought!"

"Ah?" said the youth, looking up through his tears.

"Yes," said the young man, with a cheering smile, "one that's bright with sunny promise. It came to me while I slept, and lingered near me like a faithful friend till I awoke, so I could rivet it in my mind and give it due attention. It speaks of freedom, brother!"

"Brother!" said the widow to herself.

"Freedom!" said the youth. "And soon?"

"Very soon. Therefore dry your eyes, my boy, and lie down and make up for the loss of last night's sleep, and awake refreshed. But you tremble?"

"I fear!" said the boy, uneasily.

"What?" asked Leon.

"I know not. But something. This strange man!" he whispered.

"Courage—courage," said the young man, tenderly. "I'll sit beside and watch you while you sleep."

"And will not leave me?"

"Not a minute—not a moment."

"Thanks—thanks. I'll pray for you while I dream!"

"Nay, let me help you," said Leon, drawing the blanket over him carefully. "Now close your eyes, and fear not. That's my own, brave Paul!"

The widow surveyed the pair with feelings which it would be difficult to describe; but that they were deep, that they penetrated through her heart and shook it till her whole being was in a tempest, was evidenced by the paleness of her cheek, the dew upon her lids, and the agitation of her frame.

An hour or two later, the sliding panel was updrawn, and a fresh loaf and pitcher were quietly introduced into the cell, but without attracting the watcher from his post, or obtaining from him a word. Faithful to his promise, he did not rise from the side of the youthful sleeper till the latter re-awoke.

"How is it with you, now?" he asked with an encouraging smile, pressing the lad's hand, which was small and fair and symmetrical as a woman's.

"Stronger," answered the boy, rising.

"That's my brave brother! But see, our repast is waiting. Let us to it with a will; for we'll need all the strength we can command, when night comes."

"Your thought is with you still?" said the youth, looking him affectionately in the eye.

"Yes, Paul; and sunnier than ever!"

The boy smiled, and cheerfully set about the distribution of the small black loaf, his own share of which he ate with a relish that did the young man good. Notwithstanding this air of well-pleased satisfaction, however, there now and then came over the country lad's brow, whenever he glanced at the stranger, a dark shade, eloquent of inward burning; and when, unperceived by his master, his eyes encountered those of the latter, they shot forth a furious flash, that told of everything but peace.

"When do you look for the return of your messenger, senor?" asked the ex-secretary, in a low voice, at the conclusion of the second meal.

"In two or three days. The ransom is heavy, and his progress will necessarily be slow."

"Three days are a long time in a den like this!" observed the young man.

"A very long time, senor!" said the widow.

No more was said; but the lady, who understood the character of the man before her, intuitively comprehended that his observation had a meaning.

The country youth's brow grew dark. He did not like the remark as addressed to the stranger.

As evening approached there was a noise as of the turning of a key in the lock, the bolt flew aside, the door opened, and the robber chief appeared.

"So, my gallant springal!" he cried, with his usual low laugh, “no ransom yet! I fear I shall have to limit your time of grace.”

“You are at liberty to act upon your judgment,” said the ex-secretary, haughtily. “I have told you from the first that I possess neither money nor friends.”

“True,” said the brigand. “But I have heard such things from others, who, after all, discovered that they had both.”

“You are complimentary! Nevertheless, as I am unaware of being any richer now than I was nine days ago, I simply repeat the statement that I made then.”

“You will not repeat it in forty-eight hours!” said the brigand, with a significant shrug. “I give you that time,” he added, turning laughingly to the widow, “to prevail upon this carpet-knight, who is not so valorous as he looks, to write you an order for a thousand pistoles. He is a sort of private chancellor of the exchequer, and might find you useful in helping him to guard his coffers, which are literally fat with gold. I throw out the hint, as I have reason to believe that he is easily persuaded.”

“When my forty-eight hours are up, you may call for me,” said Leon, proudly. “In the meanwhile, I will thank you to send somebody to replenish my lamp, which, as you perceive, gives a light as feeble as your hope of obtaining ransom from me.”

“The varlet knows his duty, and loves his ears too well to neglect it,” said the brigand. “This is his night-round, I believe; and after he has filled the outer burners, he will attend to yours. But you had better reflect upon my advice. Life is worth something, and this popinjay carries a sword better than he uses it. Think of it!”

With these words the ruffian moved, with his characteristic laugh, from the cell, which he locked with menacing sharpness, to deepen the impression of his threat.

Leon smiled, and pacing the floor, mused upon the details of his thought. Pausing at length near his late mistress, he remarked, in a subdued voice—

“If, senor, you tire of your sojourn here, as I doubt not you do as heartily as I, it may be abridged.”

“In what way?” asked the lady, looking up.

“Leave that to me,” answered the young man. “All I ask of you is to hold yourself in readiness for flight. I would suggest, in addition, that, as it will probably be late ere the lamp trimmer comes, you had better in the interim strengthen yourself for the journey with a few hours' sleep. I will call you at the proper moment.”

“I will do so, senor.”

“One word. Is your destination Madrid?”

“Madrid.”

“In that case it will be necessary to send a private messenger to Toledo to stay the departure of your ransom. Sleep, now, senor.”

“And with a light heart. Thank you!”

“Paul, my brother, did you overhear my remarks to this gentleman?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Then apply them to yourself. I will call you when all is ready.”

And the widow and the youth did as he requested them, confident that he would fulfil his word to the letter.

With the young man himself, however, it was an anxious interval that elapsed between their sleeping and waking.

Slowly, torturingly, the hours glided on. The hum of voices and the clink of glasses, accompanied with frequent bursts of laughter, at length reached the ex-secretary. He stepped to the door, and, putting his ear to the grating, listened. Ribald songs, audacious blasphemies, indecent jests, and vulgar toasts, from male and female lips, were borne to him upon the air.

It was the usual nightly revelry.

He turned away, pacing the apartment with feverish steps, and meditating upon his thought.

At length the bacchanalia drew towards its close. The songs and jests grew fewer, the laughter lighter, the blasphemy less frequent. One by one the voices ceased, and dimmer and more dim became the light through the grating. By and bye all was over—and, save the heavy breathings of the revelers as they reclined heavily in slumber—all was still.

“The moment is approaching!” muttered Leon, quietly loosening his belt and the other fastenings of his garments, for the purpose of securing full play to his muscles.

In about an hour he heard a fumbling near the grating, then the slow insertion of a key, then the turning of the lock, and then the pressure of a human body against the door.

Controlling his impatient nerves with an effort of his will, he sat down by the table, in which he leaned in an attitude of thought.

At this moment, the door swung back, and a swarthy, one-eyed ruffian, grizzled, and stout, and grim, entered with a partially unsteady step, and bearing in one hand an oil feeder of a clumsy make and size, and in the other a lighted torch. He was without hat or doublet, and was dressed in a striped, close-fitting shirt—which revealed, in all their amplitude and vigor, the herculean strength and the massive vigor of his brawny chest and arms; trunks, much the worse for grease and wear; white hose, spotted and stained with oil and blood and dirt; and buff boots, the tops reaching to his knees, and the uppers discolored till they had almost attained to a murky black. A huge leathern belt around his waist contained a knife and a large-sized pistol, which, together with a hanger at his thigh, were his only arms.

“So so, master fire-eater,” he exclaimed, in an unsteady tone, as his single orb lit on the ex-secretary, “still up—eh? You ought to be in your blanket—all honest people are, at this hour.”

“Can we sleep when we would?” returned the young man. “When the brain is racked with thought and the heart with suffering, may we sink easily into repose? O, that we could! Look there!” he added, pointing to his blanket, which was rumpled as if with a vain attempt to woo slumber's refreshing balm.

“Poor fellow!” said the lamp-trimmer. “I often have to get up myself when I have lain me down, with thinking. I'd get along well enough but for that. It's the devil in our profession. Some, when over-troubled with it, make an end of themselves. But I'm sleepy, and must hurry through with your lamp. We've been making a merry night of it, and the sooner I follow my comrades to bed, the better it will be for me in the morning.”

So saying, he put down the oil-feeder, and drew forward the table, for the purpose of standing on it to take down the lamp.

“Let me assist you,” said Leon, approaching and relieving him of the torch.

“You are very kind,” said the trimmer, raising himself to his knees on the table, and reaching up with both hands to withdraw the lamp from the chain.

This was the young man's opportunity.

Resting the torch against the table, he, quick as thought, bent forward and snatching the knife and pistol from the trimmer's belt, exclaimed, as the latter fell in mingled confusion and affright to his feet—

“*A breath—a word—a movement of alarm, and this bullet is in your heart!*”

The lamp-trimmer glared at the young man, and appeared, from the peculiar light in his eye, to be debating the policy of risking all by crying out. But the steady, threatening gaze of the latter unnerved him in the thought, and doggedly folding his arms, he sullenly demanded—

“What is your will?”

“A word ere I answer,” returned Leon, the pistol still raised and his finger still upon the trigger. “How long have you been attached to this band?”

“Four years.”

“What are your savings?”

“Two hundred pistoles, it may be; perhaps more, perhaps less. I keep no account.”

“Is it your wish to continue this kind of life?”

“I—I am an escaped felon,” said the lamp-trimmer, “and if caught, but one fate awaits me—the axe!”

“A felon?”

“A lord dishonored my daughter, and I stabbed him!” said the man.

“And you did right. Your occupation, then?”

“A butcher.”

“You have been guilty of no other crime?”

“None, except that of breaking prison and escaping to the mountains.”

“Does your daughter still live?”

The man was silent from emotion. His burly frame seemed to be shaken from crown to foot with spasmodic feeling.

Leon understood that he scarcely dared to think upon the subject, which evidently unmanned him.

“Your daughter is dear to you. I see it. Have you a wife?”

“No,” said the robber, in a hollow voice.

“Sons?”

“None.”

“What if you were pardoned the killing of this lord, enriched, and free to rejoin your child, to resume your business, and to hold up your head like an honest man once more?”

“You are speaking of impossibilities, senor!” said the man, slowly, after a few moments of thought.

“Why impossible? They may be yours ere noon to-morrow.”

The lamp-trimmer looked at him in mingled inquiry and doubt.

“I insure them to you on the faith of the king's proclamation, which promises a large reward to whoever will deliver Zumala, your chief, to justice, if the capturer be a simple citizen; and pardon of all offences and a lesser sum to whoever of his band will do the State a like service.”

“I will not turn traitor!” answered the man, proudly.

“Is it treachery to bring to punishment a wretch who makes a trade of slaughtering whoever comes in his way for money? What claim has he upon the higher instincts of humanity, who has none himself—who waylays innocent, unsuspecting travelers, and if they be too poor to satisfy his greed, deliberately shoots them down or throws them over a precipice? Has such a beast the same right as an honest man to live? What charter has he to life that others' life respects not? Is faith to be kept with one who has none; mercy shown to him who has no mercy? Or are you so devoid of all the high principles of manhood that you know no sympathy except for those that are at war with them?”

This was a kind of logic to which the brigand was unaccustomed, and it made a deep impression upon his rude but not wholly depraved mind.

“What would you have me do?” he demanded, slowly.

“To choose between an honest life and the one you are now leading—pardon, and the stigma of an outlaw—peace of heart, and remorse—competence, and at the best, wretched fare—freedom to go whithersoever you will, and confinement in these mountains—your child's society, and that of assassins.”

“Enough!” said the man, after a momentary mental struggle. “My choice is made. Command me!”

Leon looked him for a time steadily in the eye; but the robber did not quail.

“I'll trust you,” said the young man, turning aside the pistol, but with his finger still upon the trigger in case of need. “Lead the way to the stable!”

The trimmer put out his hand to take the torch.

“I will carry that,” said Leon, warily. “I have faith in your word; but you cannot reasonably complain if I use such precaution as he may justly take whose life depends upon his carefulness.”

“Nay, you may trust me,” said the man, shrugging his shoulders. “Freedom is as sweet to me as to you,” he added, moving from the cell.

“I have confidence in myself and in this bullet!” said Leon, following him.

The robber, if he had any thought of treachery, was prevented from acting upon it by the consciousness that the young man, who was close behind him, would instantly shoot him down in his tracks.

He led the way in silence to the outer cave, where by the light of the torches which were still burning, Leon beheld many of the band stretched, some on mats, and others on the rude floor, in drunken slumber.

“Who are these?” he demanded of the guide.

“The watchers!” was the satirical reply.

“Where are the others?”

“In a large inner vault on the left with their wives. To-morrow night it will be their turn to watch.”

“And the chief?”

“Is in that small nook contrived off in the centre.”

“Is there no sentinel?”

“It was my turn on duty to-night!” said the man, with a dry smile.

“Enough. Time is precious. To the stable.”

“This way,” said the brigand, turning as if towards the outer air. He passed through a short, rude hall, whose dark, rocky sides seemed to frown upon the ex-secretary's project, and to warn him to desist. Suddenly the robber paused, and dropped crouchingly to the earth.

“What now?” demanded Leon, pointing the muzzle of the pistol to his head.

The man made a significant sign of silence.

There was a muttering sound, as of one grumbling.

“'Tis only a sleeper dreaming?” said the brigand, rising, after a pause, to his feet. Hold up the light.”

The young man did so, and immediately beheld before him on the left, the craggy entrance to the stable, whose odor had already informed him that he was in its neighborhood.

“How many shall I get out?” said the robber, alluding to the horses.

“How many have you?”

“Eighteen, not including those of the prisoners.”

“How many men are there in your troop?”

“Ten days since there was a man to every horse, but your capture lessened the number by three, so that now we have three horses to spare,” answered the robber, with a dubious smile.

“Lead them *all* out,” said Leon.

The robber turned and looked at him, as if in doubt whether he had heard aright.

“Lead them all out,” repeated Leon.

“O, I see!” observed the man, with a dry twinkle. “You intend to cut off all possibility of pursuit? A bright idea, faith!”

Leon made no reply.

“First,” said the trimmer, now moving with an alacrity that satisfied the ex-secretary of his sincerity, “first light me till I push aside this stone.”

The latter was a large triangular slab nearly opposite the entrance to the stable, and from its size and apparent weight appeared to call for the united strength of half-a-dozen men. But a comparatively slight pressure on the part of the robber, sufficed to set it aside, and Leon then perceived that it moved on muffled rollers.

Instantly appeared through the opening a small dark wood, the small clearing between which and the cave, was nearly as bright as day with the rich streamings of a pure moonlight.

He started, for the suddenness of the scene, and the first burst of fresh air, acted upon him like an electric shock.

“Nurse your nerves,” said the man, with a quiet smile. “We have work before us, and though the band are sleeping off their debauch, it is not impossible that one or more may start up and give the alarm!”

“Out with the horses!” said Leon, comprehending that having once obtained the mastery over the robber's will, it was necessary to retain it.

The latter shrugged his shoulders, and muttering, “Still doubtful!” entered the stable.

One by one he led out the horses, saddled and bridled, fastening each to a tree, and patting them familiarly on the neck to give them confidence.

“What next?” he demanded.

“First, the prisoners,” said Leon.

“First?” repeated the man in surprise.

“As I have said!” returned Leon, in a tone that admitted of no parleying.

They returned to the cell, on reaching which, Leon softly laid his hand upon the shoulder of the widow, who at once started to her feet. On perceiving the robber, she stepped back.

“He is a friend, senor,” said the ex-secretary, with a re-assuring smile. “All is ready. Patience and caution!”

The widow bowed, and Leon woke up the country lad, in the same quick manner. This done, they passed quietly from the cave.

The widow picked out her Arabian, and in a trice was on his back.

Paul soon found his own horse, and sprang lightly into the saddle.

“Have you ropes?” said Leon, in a low tone to the robber.

“Enough to hang an army,” answered the latter, with a grin.

“We want sufficient to lash a man on each horse, to tie the horses in pairs, and to run them in two bodies, one under your management, and the other under mine!” said Leon, revealing his plan to the man for the first time, and looking him at the same moment steadily in the eye.

The boldness and the audacity of the scheme took the robber aback. But it was only for an instant. Recovering himself he gave way to a quiet laugh, and observed—

“The fame of this exploit will forever drown the obloquy that might arise from my treachery. Come on!”

And he led the way to the interior of the cave, and thence to a moderate-sized apartment, stored with oils, ropes, provisions, bottled liquors, hangers, fusils, poniards, etc., etc., which were arranged with but slight regard to order. Selecting a bundle of stout cord, they quitted the store-room and, treading softly, returned to the outer air, where, measuring the probable length requisite for binding each man, the robber cut the cord into strips, to each of which he made a slip-noose, and then taking one in his hand, and accompanied by the ex-secretary, he cautiously re-entered the cave, and the store-room, pausing at length, with a quiet chuckle, beside a barrel with a green lid.

“The captain,” he observed, “when having these made in Toledo, had but little thought that he should ever have them tried upon himself!”

“What are they?” demanded Leon.

“Choke-pears,” answered the robber. “He got them for the purpose of silencing the cries of prisoners previous to throwing them over the precipice.”

“Retribution!” remarked Leon. “It is the vengeance of Heaven that villains shall perish through their own cunning. But time presses!”

The robber took the hint; and stuffing the pockets of his trunks with the ingenious articles, he turned from the store-room, and threaded his way, with Leon at his heels, to the lodgings of the chief, who lay upon an upraised couch, breathing heavily.

Leon glanced around him. It was a small apartment, or rather natural hollow nearly in the form of an egg. It was perhaps about twenty feet high, and in the centre sixteen or eighteen in depth. It was furnished with a rude luxury that bespoke more of plenty than of good taste. A strong high chest, with bands of polished iron, served the double purpose of a depository of treasure and a table. A bandolin, gaily ornamented with ribbons, stood against the wall which was covered with scarlet cloth richly ornamented with brilliants of every form and of various degrees of lustre. The floor was overlaid with blue stuff; a torch of rosewood with silver burners, stood a short distance from the couch, while numerous weapons and articles of apparel were scattered about in careless confusion. The chief himself, as was indicated by a suspicious-looking bottle on the chest, had deepened his potations after quitting the evening rouse, and was now steeped in the lethe of drunken repose.

The ex-secretary drew near and held up his torch while the trimmer cautiously approached and bent over the chief. Carefully slipping the noose under the sleeper's head and shoulders, till it encircled his arms, he planted his knee softly upon the breast; then drawing a choke-pear from his pocket, he held it a moment over the mouth, and then suddenly forced it in. The pear instantly expanded, and filling the mouth, which assumed the aspect of a large round bulge, created a sensation of pain which immediately awoke the chief, who, to his consternation and surprise, found himself bound hand and foot, as in a vice, and utterly unable to cry out. He glared savagely from the trimmer to the ex-secretary, and then apparently taking in the whole character of his position, he made a convulsive effort both to alarm his comrades and to free himself, but discovering that the effort only tightened his hands the faster, and expanded the choke-pear the more, he sullenly resigned himself to his fate; whereupon the burly trimmer lifted him up and threw him over his shoulder as though he were a mere child, and bearing him from the cave, lashed him like a second Mazeppa to the back of a forlorn-looking mule, which was no other than that which the fortunate patron of St. Catherine had exchanged for the fleet-footed Andalusian.

It was no slight task for the trimmer and the ex-secretary, who, after the binding of the captain, had no longer any suspicion of the former's sincerity, to complete their task; for most of the robbers in the inner cave were with their wives, who, however, had drunk as much and were equally as deep in slumber as their husbands. But the last of the band was at length brought out and bound to his horse's back, and all fears for the success of the enterprise were over.

The trimmer, in accordance with Leon's original plan, tied the horses with the prisoners into pairs, and the pairs into two bodies—that led by Leon consisting of four pairs, and that by the trimmer of four and a half—that is to say of nine horses.

As they were about to set out, the trimmer was suddenly favored with an idea, and requesting the ex-secretary to accompany him, led the way for the last time into the cave.

“I had almost forgotten,” he said, “that I am hardly fit to appear in the capital.”

“A tailor would soon fit you out there,” observed Leon.

“True; but I may have to call on a magistrate first, and my reception would be more favorable in clean velvet than in these!”

And he pointed to his greasy trunks and hose.

“The captain's wardrobe,” added the trimmer, with a dry laugh, “has often dazzled my eyes, and I will pay my respects to it, that the crowd who witness our entry into the city, may learn to pay some respect to *me!*”

With these words he pushed aside the curtain and passed into the robber's apartment, where a few minutes sufficed to transform him, in appearance at least, from a vulgar ruffian into a richly-dressed cavalier.

While arraying himself in his new costume, his eye fell thoughtfully upon the treasure-chest, which, after finishing dressing, he approached and adroitly wrenched open. It was filled nearly to the brim with gold and jewels.

“There,” he said, his one eye sparkling with greed, “this will make men of us. Help yourself. It is ours as much as Zumala's, and will make us rich and respected.”

“I will take back the four hundred pistoles which were stolen from me on my capture,” said Leon. “But the rest is not mine, and I'll not touch it.”

“As for me,” laughed the trimmer, cramming his pockets with gold and jewels, “I am not so particular! Every man to his taste; mine is for plenty. And that,” he added, visited with a sudden thought, “puts me in mind that we have another prisoner here—a count, I believe, who was taken yesterday. I had well nigh forgotten him. It was my intention to refill his lamp, after I had finished yours; and it was thus that all thought of him slipped from my memory.”

“Let us hasten and release him.”

“This way,” said the trimmer.

And moving from the main cave he proceeded down the passage leading to the cell in which Leon and his two friends had so recently been confined. On reaching the extremity of this passage, he turned into another, and halted before a rude heavy door, with a small grating near the top. A peculiar pressure upon the handle of the lock, caused the bolt to slide back, and the door opening, Leon perceived sitting at a small table within, a short, stout personage in black velvet. His hair was bleached as much with thought as age, and his straight, well-defined features, which in their youth had been both handsome and commanding, had that peculiar air which comes from a long familiarity with responsibility and care.

“Well, sirs,” he said, rising, “why this visit? Has my servant returned with my ransom?”

“It means, senor,” said Leon, with mingled dignity and respect, “that we have come to set you free, and to invite you, if your way be in that direction, to share our journey to Madrid.”

The stranger calmly looked at the speaker a few moments, and then tranquilly observed:

“You appear to possess the bearing of a gentleman, senor, and, though not understanding this, I will trust you. I think,” he added, addressing the trimmer, “that it is my sword you have on.”

“Indeed!” laughingly said the latter, taking off the weapon and handing it to him. “Take it, then! This gentleman will explain to you how it came in my possession. And while he is doing it, I will to the captain's apartmentand provide myself with another. In the meanwhile, you had better make, with what speed you can, to the outer air. Time flies, and we have a long ride before us!”

So saying, he hastened from the cell.

Leon gave his arm to the stranger, who, having been unable to partake of the wretched fare provided for him, was weak from hunger, and they passed from the cave. On the way Leon explained the incidents of the night in a few words, to which the old gentleman listened in grave surprise; hardly crediting the truth of the statement till, on reaching the exterior, he beheld the robbers lashed to the horses' backs, when he looked up at the ex-secretary with an expression of astonishment, and then dropped into a silent study.

The trimmer soon appeared with a new sword at his side; and after saddling and giving the odd horse to the stranger, he mounted his own, and the party moved from the cave, in the following order: the widow and the country youth, abreast; after them the stranger, who had not a word to say during the journey; then Leon mounted on a gallant barb, and holding in his right hand a long, slender cord leading his eight horses and prisoners; and, last of all, the trimmer with his eight horses and six prisoners.

But little was said from the cave to the capital, which the party reached just as the majority of the inhabitants were sitting down to breakfast; that is to say, about eight o'clock. But this did not prevent many hundreds from witnessidg the singular sight presented by the robbers lashed to their horses' backs, nor a great crowd from following the captives on their way to the office of the minister of police.

As they fairly entered the city, the stranger turned to the ex-secretary, and in a slow, calm, thoughtful voice, inquired his name.

Leon gave it, and then asked whom he had the honor of addressing.

“No matter,” was the reply. “But many thanks for your gallant feat, and also for releasing me from my dungeon. Adieu!”

And he rode off slowly and in thought. As he disappeared, the widow, to whom the increasing crowd became a matter of concern, drew up, and taking the young man's hand, observed—

“I will not thank you now, brave senor, for your heroism and kindness; but if you purpose to remain in Madrid any considerable time, I shall take an opportunity of seeking you out and acknowledging my obligation. Fair day to you, senor!”

So saying, she bowed, turned the Arabian's head and disappeared around the angle of a contiguous street.

Leon rode on thoughtfully, followed by the crowd, which appeared to increase at every step. As he turned into the street leading to the public prison, he beheld, observing him from under the hood of a monk of the order of St. Francis, the well known features of his father. A half smothered cry of joy escaped him, and he was about to rise up and to leap from his horse, when the latter made him a sign to pass on.

With that calm obedience which had ever distinguished him as a son, Leon complied, and five minutes later he drew up at the door of the minister of police, to whom he delivered the prisoners, and to whom he related the trimmer's share in the feat that had terminated in their capture.

Great was the excitement in the magisterial office, great the excitement in the prison, great the excitement in the palace, great the excitement throughout the city when it was known that the dread chief of the mountains was positively in the hands of justice; and greater still the excitement everywhere when the story got out of how and by whom the bold brigand and his band were taken.

Ere nightfall, the trimmer was free, in the possession of three thousand pistoles, more than he had taken from the chest in the cave, and happy in the society of his daughter, whom he found earning a virtuous living as servant to a wealthy lady.

Leon's name was upon every lip, and himself richer by five thousand pistoles than when he entered the city in the morning. But though these were matters of importance, since they promised to assist him in acquiring a name, he yet gave them but little attention: his thoughts being equally divided between the fair object of his secret love and his father.

Paul, the country youth, retired to rest at a late hour with a gloomy brow, and tossed on his couch all night with uneasy dreams.

CHAPTER XVIII.

IN WHICH THE WIDOW LEARNS THAT HER LOVE IS BY NO MEANS A CONDESCENSION.

There was inquietude at the palace. The king, the queen, and all who held offices of profit, of honor, and of trust, wore disturbed looks. This air of solicitude was observable in every countenance in the royal household, as well as in all the public offices. The receptions, balls and public displays at the palace, all partook of this air of gloom. And it was very natural: for it portended a great change in the face of the government, or at least in the faces of nearly all holding office.

Ramirez, the prime minister, was failing.

This great man, who grown first gray and then white, and then bald, under the weight of a whole nation's cares; who had found the State without credit, without money, and deeply in debt, and was about to leave it with boundless credit, with an overflowing treasury, and without owing a pistole in all the world; who had carried it successfully through twelve wars, and who had raised it from a negative position to a star place among the nations—this great man, we say, was plainly on the eve of resigning his commission and taking his place among the things of the past.

And this was the reason of the king's gloom; for where should he find another of equal genius to take this great man's place; where another whom he could so confidently trust to sustain the dignity of his crown, and relieve him of all the anxieties of State; where one who could be relied upon to carry the nation successfully along? True, there were many who would be only too happy to undertake the responsibilities of the office, able men among them, too, who had proven themselves equal to all the emergencies of high office; but none of experience in positions equal to that held by Ramirez.

And this was the reason of the queen's gloom, also; for she knew the king to be a man who could not get along with credit unless he had a strong arm to lean upon, like that of the giant statesman whom time was cutting down.

And this was the reason of the gloom that sat upon the brows of all in authority: they knew not whom to pay court to as the probable successor of him who had appointed them to office; therefore, since they could form no conception of the probability of their reappointment, they felt it incumbent upon them to make the most of the little time of which they were certain, viz:—the official term of the present minister. This it was that inspired them to send their compliments from day to day to the palace of the feeble statesman to inquire the state of his health, and to learn whether the symptoms of to-day were more favorable than those of yesterday,

But if the king was in distress as to who should wear the mantle of his favorite, the prime minister himself was not less so. It was something to him, in feeling at least, that when he resigned the reins of office they should fall into the hands of a man capable of managing them; one who could grasp the secrets and power of State, without staggering under their weight: and who could take up his titanic task where Ramirez left off, and bear the nation on skilfully and in safety, without permitting its interests to be in any wise damaged by the change.

For the old man loved the country in which he was born, and in whose service he had grown old; and he loved the office which enabled him to raise her from an impoverished nation to one of the foremost on the earth: and he wished to see that office fall to one worthy of it—one both able and eager to lead the country safely and to the threshold of a glorious future.

These were the thoughts that mostly occupied the mind of the aged statesman a few weeks prior to the great feat which had signalized Leon's first visit to Madrid. While looking around for one worthy to succeed him, he one morning, while riding to the royal palace, beheld, advancing down the street, a monk of the order of St. Francis, whose bold, majestic mien, and noble, intellectual features so strongly impressed him that he could not drive the image from his mind, where it remained like a permanent guest in spite of all his efforts to dislodge it; for in that face he read great depth of penetration, quickness of decision, resolution that knew no faltering, and experience: a combination of qualities rarely found in a single individual, and he had intuitively said to himself, “That is a man of a thousand!” And this was why he could not banish the man's features from his mind. On returning to his own palace, he again beheld the monk, walking energetically as before: but this time proceeding up the street, whereas in the morning it was in a contrary direction. The prime minister, on catching his eye, stopped his chair, and with a motion of his small, thin finger, beckoned him to approach.

The monk did so with a calm dignity and collectedness that satisfied the minister that he was a man of high breeding, and more familiar with courts than with the cloister.

“Do you know me?” asked the minister.

“I do, my lord,” answered the monk, unabashed at his searching gaze. “Shall I name your title?”

“It is not necessary,” said the minister, more impressed by the superior mind written on his features. “Call on me to-morrow.”

“At what hour, my lord?”

“Umph—at nine.”

The Franciscan bowed with dignity; and then, according to etiquette, remained standing in the position in which he had been addressed, till the chair of the minister had commenced to move on. Then turning from the spot, he continued his walk like one accustomed all his life to intercourse with the great.

"I was right," muttered the minister, upon whom nothing was lost. "This is some nobleman in disguise."

On reaching his palace and his cabinet, he put his small, thin hands together under his lips, and leaning back in his chair and looking absently at a map before him over his desk—his favorite attitude in thought—endeavored to study out the individuality, that is to say the characteristics of which those features were the index. This, so rapid and well-trained was the minister's mind, did not take many minutes. When it was done, he set himself again to work to discover when and where he had seen the owner of these features before, for that they were not wholly new to him he felt confident. He went back ten years, and called to mind the leading incidents of each year, and the persons that figured in those incidents, but without setting his mortal eye upon that face. Five years further behind led to no better success; nor yet another five, and he was about to give the task up in despair, when, on taking a retrospect of the twenty-third year, he at length beheld the features. They wore a youthful air, and were those of a nobleman, who was wiping his sword which had just passed through the body of another, who was lying a few paces from him on the grass. The minister frowned, for the body of the dead man was that of his younger brother.

"I have him!" he exclaimed to himself. "'Tis Don Garcia de Vega!"

And he reflected.

At the close of his meditations, he raised a small silver whistle to his lips and blew it. The door of the cabinet opened, and an attendant appeared.

"A monk of the order of St. Francis will call to-morrow morning," said the minister. "See that he is admitted. And hark you! Let none others enter till he has taken his departure."

At the appointed hour the next day the attendant announced the Franciscan, who entered with his customary dignity, and placing his hand upon his heart in token of acknowledgment of his inferiority in the prime minister's presence, waited for that personage to address him. The latter motioned him to a chair. As this placed him on an equality with the minister, de Vega, for we shall now call him by his proper name, seated himself with the calm dignity of a man who is no longer under the restraint of courtly etiquette.

"It is a long time," began Ramirez, leaning back in his chair and surveying his visitor with a bland smile, "it is a long time, count, since you and I have had speech together!"

"A long time, my lord," said de Vega, perceiving that he was known, but without manifesting any surprise.

"It is three and twenty years."

"Your lordship ever has been famed for the accuracy of your memory," said the count.

"Three and twenty years," repeated Ramirez, "since I, with this hand, signed the order for the headsman to do his work upon you."

"It is true, my lord," said de Vega, calmly.

"And yet," said the minister, "notwithstanding that order, you are still alive! What am I to understand by this?"

"That the headsman did not do his duty, my lord," answered the count, without the movement of a muscle.

"Or, that he was prevented from doing it—eh, count?"

"Your lordship is quite right."

"But," continued Ramirez, with a fox-smile, "though a little dingy with age, that order is still upon record, and the State has still a headsman!"

"Your lordship ever had a sharp eye to facts from which others turned in dismay."

"It is but the blowing of this whistle," said Ramirez, holding it up in his hand, "and the headsman will commence the whetting of his axe!"

"But your lordship will not blow that whistle!" said the count, calmly.

"And pray, why not?"

"For three reasons, my lord."

"Name them, sir."

"First, my lord, because I am here at your invitation, which makes me in the character of a guest, and renders my person sacred."

"Good reasoning, count, since its object is to ignore my office as the king's minister, and to convert me into your host. But you forget that as the king's minister, I am always on duty!"

"I forget nothing, my lord, that it behooves one in my position constantly to bear in mind. Behind the minister's is a still prouder title—yea, prouder than any king's—that of a Spanish *gentleman*, which you would first have to put off ere you could descend to an act that would blacken your name forever."

"Secondly," suggested Ramirez, who mentally was pleased with the answer.

"Secondly, my lord, your sense of justice would not permit you to rake up an order which with one stroke of the pen, deprived a nobleman of his title, his property, his friends, his freedom, and plunged him into twenty-three years of obscurity, suffering, and poverty."

"Thirdly," said Ramirez, brushing a speck of dust from the sleeve of his doublet, to temporarily avoid the eye of his interlocutor.

"Thirdly, my lord," said de Vega, in his tranquil manner, "if your lordship should so forget the sacredness of the person of your guest ——"

"What then, sir?" demanded Ramirez, seeing him pause.

"Then, my lord," said de Vega, with an air of stately grandeur, "I should remember that in the wars of thirty years ago, my gallant captain's name and fame became the property of every honest heart in Spain, and ere your lordship could do aught to tarnish it, I would bury my dagger in your breast, and deem it a noble and patriotic deed!"

The minister turned pale; but immediately recovering himself, said—

"Your old captain will do nothing to damage his reputation in the eyes of his second lieutenant. And now, sir, remember that it is the prime minister and not Captain Ramirez who is speaking to you. Give an account of yourself. Where have you spent the three-and-twenty years during which justice—or, if you will, my order—has waited for your head?"

"On a country estate a few miles from Toledo, my lord."

"In what capacity?"

"That of a woodman."

"So. And your wife?"

"For nineteen years, I every evening after labor, mused upon her grave."

"There was a child, methinks?" suggested the minister, with peevish impatience.

"Your lordship is right. Grown to manhood, and full of the yearnings of his high blood, he, ignorant of his birth, drudges his life away, in inglorious toil, at Toledo."

"So," said the minister. And he fell into thought.

De Vega observed his countenance to see if he could read what impression he had made. But he might as well have tried to sound the sea.

The minister woke at length from his reverie and fixing his eye upon the count carefully scanned him, feature by feature.

"How old is your son?" he then demanded.

"Twenty-five, my lord."

"His name?"

"Leon."

"That will do, count. Call again at this hour, to-morrow."

De Vega bowed and backed himself from the cabinet, wondering what was in store for him, pardon, or the axe.

He was punctual on the following morning, but on taking the chair pointed out to him, he could observe nothing in the countenance of the minister to inform him of his probable fate.

"I wish to know," said the statesman, "the details of your duel with my brother?"

"For what purpose, my lord?"

"You forget, count," said the minister, with an expression of grave surprise, "that I am not in the habit of being questioned!"

"I cannot be ignorant of so well known a fact, my lord. But if your lordship will remember, it is after you have signed my death-warrant that you have put this interrogatory, which, permit me, twenty-three years a sufferer by the error, to observe, would have come with a better grace before!"

"I excuse that remark, count, for the reason you have given," said the minister; "but do not repeat it. I am in no humor this morning to submit to unnecessary allusions."

"Will your lordship be so kind as to inform me whether it is to a friend or a judge I am to relate these details?"

"To a judge, sir," answered the minister, coldly.

"It is well, my lord. Then I will state only the facts in the transaction, and leave your lordship to draw the inferences. Were it to a friend, I should give the facts as they appeared to me, the opinion that I entertained of each, and describe the feelings that they begot in the parties most interested. But since it is to a judge, I shall omit all save the outlines."

"I am waiting, sir," said the minister, impatiently.

"I shall endeavor to be brief, my lord. I will commence by stating that I am of a race who never tamely submitted to outrage, nor been the first to lay down the sword once it has been unsheathed to right an injury. I say not this boastingly, but that your lordship may understand what follows. Twenty-three years ago, I was high in favor with the father of the present king. I had a wife, whose pure fame was only equalled by her love for her husband and only child. She was fair, men said, but not more lovely than modest, and not more modest than virtuous. When she appeared in the queen's train, the queen herself was less observed than she. Wherever she went, peace followed, whatever she said was treasured as the wisdom-drops of a maid that had never yet breathed the atmosphere of evil. There were roysterers at court; but in her presence, the jest that crimsons palest cheek with shame, was broken, and the light laugh that's coupled with the names of lighter women, silent. Wherever she walked there vice shrunk back abashed, or assumed the robes and air of virtue that it might not offend *her* ear. One alone, in all the court was vile enough to wager—do you hear, my lord—to wager!—that he could breathe words into her ear which she would not repel, and that in a given number of days he would be able to point to her and say; 'light as any in the gossamer of guilt.' Now, say, my lord, had this been *your* wife, what you would have done?"

"Go on, sir," said the minister, coldly.

"The miscreant—did he deserve a *nobler* name, my lord!—the miscreant, a swaggerer relying for protection on his more puissant brother, dared in the lady's ear to utter the unholy wish, and crept pale and coward-like away at the *look* which answered him! Ere yet the indignant blush that the base creature's tongue called up had wilted from her cheek, my wife the story told to me. Ere I proceed, my lord, first tell me what would have been your course, if this fair wife had called *you* husband?"

"I am waiting, sir, to hear the end!" said Ramirez.

"I was writing at the time a letter to the king; but put down the pen, and rising, went out, without saying a word, in search of the boasting fool, whom I found leaning against a tree in the palace garden and relating, with rare gusto, to a laughing crowd of hair-brains like himself the 'rareness of the jest!' Without a word I smote him on the cheek to rouse his coward heart up to valor, and bade him follow me, which he did, with half a score or more of his companions, to a small wood a mile or two beyond the boundaries of the town. On reaching a cleared space, we threw off our doublets and drew. Three passes, quick as light—and the villain was in the presence of his God! I wiped my blade, and drawing on my doublet, returned to my wife, and imprinting a kiss of confidence upon her cheek, informed her that the insult was avenged! These, my lord, are the outlines of my duel with your brother. I did not stop to consider whose friend or relative he was. Had he been brother to the king—yea, the king himself, I would have done the same. Tell me now, if you are an honest judge, if I did not act the part of a husband and a man; tell me whether you would not have struck him down, if he were forty brothers all in one, yea, and at the very altars's foot?"

"You state," said the minister, "that if the king himself had been the culprit, you would have done the same."

"I do, my lord. And now, your judgment!"

The minister reflected awhile, and then observed,—

"That will do to-day, count. Call again, at this hour, to-morrow."

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

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JUDGMENT OF THE AREOPAGUS.

The decisions of the Areopagites of Athens have long been famous for their wisdom. The learned Phocius, in his Bibliotheque, expatiates with delight on one decision, which shows that it was a wisdom tempered with an admirable spirit of humanity. The Areopagites were assembled together on a mountain, with no other roof but the canopy of heaven. A sparrow, pursued by a hawk, fled into the midst of them for refuge; it took shelter in the bosom of one of them, a man naturally of a harsh and repulsive disposition, who taking hold of the little trembler, threw it from him with such violence, that it was killed on the spot. The whole assembly were filled with indignation at the cruelty of the deed; the author of it was instantly arraigned as an alien to that sentiment of mercy so necessary to the administration of justice; and by the unanimous suffrages of his colleagues, was degraded from the senatorial dignity, which he had so much disgraced.

SOMETHING YET.

BY SALLIE M. BRYAN.

They call me beautiful, and fame
Forever echoes on my name,
And crowds before me bow;
Yes, I have loveliness and grace,
Where years as yet have left no trace,
And laurels bind my brow.

Like an enchanted palace, raised
By poet-dreams, when fancy blazed
With burning glory, seems
My home! that place of all most blest—
That ark of refuge and of rest,
That sleeps in golden gleams.

Its graceful marble-spires float high,
As if to kiss the smiling sky;
And in its dreamy halls,
'Mid all things bright, I pass the hours,
While far in starlight groves and flowers
Sweet music swells and falls.

And he—no form of marble mold,
Whose classic charms, all fair and cold,
Stand sadly in the real,
Where dreamy poets sigh to view,
Silent and calm and *soulless* too,
Their idolized ideal—

These, these are scarce more bright than he
Whose heart and genius shrine for me
A heaven of love and light!
And infant angels in my dreams
Are not more beautiful than seems
My smiling child to-night.

Fame, riches, beauty—ay, and *love*—
By woman prized all else above,
Are mine—but one regret,
Faint, strange, and shadowy, haunts my brain,
And grasps afar—in vain, in vain—
Ah, there's a something yet

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ONE ANGRY MOMENT.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"No," said Mr. Bray, looking up from the newspaper he was reading, and speaking with unusual sharpness of tone.

A young man, one of his clerks, stood before him.

"Do you understand me! No—I said no! Send Mr. Carlton word that I neither borrow nor lend."

The clerk had hesitated about sending back the rough refusal of Mr. Bray to accommodate a neighbor with the loan of a couple of hundred dollars, within an hour of bank closing, even on the explanation that he was "short on a note." But, at this emphatic confirmation of the first refusal, he turned from his employer and went forward to where the messenger of Mr. Carlton awaited an answer.

"I'm tired of this eternal borrowing," said Mr. Bray to himself, in justification of his angry refusal to accommodate a neighbor. "Why don't he make timely provision for his notes as I do, and not go money-hunting at the eleventh hour? I'm not going to reduce my bank balance to meet his careless deficiencies. There is too much of this idle dependence among traders to suit my notions of things."

But these words of justification did not bring the mind of Mr. Bray into a state of calm self-satisfaction. Reason did not approve his hastily uttered denial; and self-respect was hurt by this sudden ebulition of anger.

"Send Mr. Carlton word that I neither borrow nor lend."

"I needn't have just said that!" Mr. Bray was already in a repentant mood. "I could have refused on any decent pretext. There was no call for an insulting denial."

Ah me! How blinding is sudden anger! For awhile, Mr. Bray sat communing with himself, and then taking up his pen, drew a check for two hundred dollars. Calling to his clerk, he said—

"Here, Thomas, run in with this to Mr. Carlton."

The young man took the check and went out hurriedly. He came back in a few minutes with the check still in his hand.

"Why didn't he take it?" asked Mr. Bray, his face deepening in color, as he put the question.

"He said he was much obliged to you, but Mr. Agnew had accommodated him."

Mr. Bray, in a very quiet manner, tore the check into small fragments. He felt badly. Mr. Agnew had the reputation of being the roughest, most unaccommodating man in the neighborhood; while he took pride in the thought of being held in very different estimation. Even Mr. Agnew had exceeded him in amiable compliance, and prompt business courtesy! He felt rebuked and humbled.

"O dear! I wish I had a little decent self-control!" he said, sharply to himself. "This quick feeling, and hasty action therefrom, are always getting me into some kind of trouble."

As Mr. Bray walked homeward, after leaving his store, that afternoon, he saw Mr. Carlton approaching at the distance of half a block ahead of him. He was conveniently near the corner of a street, and so taking the flag-stones, he crossed over, and thus avoided meeting his neighbor."

"I don't like this," he said, in some humiliation, to himself, as he breathed a little more freely. "Skulking like a criminal don't suit me at all! Why should I fear to look any man in the face?"

Mr. Bray was, usually, a cheerful man at home; though he sometimes darkened the home-light for a season, through fits of sudden anger, that soon subsided. But even the briefly ruling tempest leaves usually some mighty traces of its course, that require many days of sunshine, gentle rains, and refreshing dews to obliterate. It was so with the tempest of Mr. Bray's too easily awakened anger. It never darkened the sky, nor swept fiercely along the earth, without leaving its ugly marks behind.

But, usually, he was cheerful in his family, bringing home with him the bright, warm sunshine. It was not so, however, on the present occasion. This little act of discourtesy to Mr. Carlton, had not only shadowed his feelings, but left his mind disturbed. He was just in a state to be annoyed by the merest trifles.

Two little boys were playing in the passage as he came in from the street. At the very moment of his entrance, one of them hurt the other by accident. The latter screamed out, and, under the passionate impulse of the moment, charged his brother with striking him. In a different state of mind, Mr. Bray would have tried a little moral suasion in the case; or, at least, withheld punishment, until he saw clearly, that duty to his child required its administration. But, now, obeying an unhappy impulse, he caught up the child who was charged with the offence of striking, and punished him with smarting strokes. At the moment of his doing so, the mother of the children, who had seen all that passed between them, called out earnestly—

"Stop! Stop, Henry! He didn't strike his brother on purpose. It was all an accident!"

But this appeal came too late. The wrong had been done.

"It's a shame!" said the mother, who felt every painful blow the child had received, and who spoke from the moment's indignant impulse.

Mr. Bray did not feel any better. Setting the child down, without venturing a reply to his wife's remark, he strode up stairs to the sitting-room, and threw himself into the great arm-chair. No one ventured to come near him for some time; so he had fair opportunity for self-communion. At last, a todling little curly-head, who generally hailed her father's return with joy, came sidling into the room, and with a half-timid air, made her way, by almost stealthy approaches to the side of the moody man. Curiously she lifted her eyes to his clouded countenance; stood for a moment or too, as if in doubt, and then clambered up, and laid her golden tresses against his bosom. As she did so, the father's arm was drawn around her. But little curly-head was not, in her unselfish innocence, content with the sunshine of favor for herself alone.

"Papa!" Her voice had in it something of doubt.

"What is it my little pet!" And Mr. Bray, who was penetrated by the child's sphere of tenderness, kissed her pure lips.

"Willy didn't hurt Eddy a purpose. He didn't strike him."

"But Eddy said that Willy struck him." The father sought to justify himself in the eyes of his child.

"Eddy only thought so," replied little curly-head. "Willy didn't strike him at all."

Mr. Bray said nothing more; but he felt very uncomfortable. When the tea-bell rung, he went, with little curly-head, to the dining-room. All the rest of the family had kept away from him. Mrs. Bray looked particularly sober; and Willy, who had been set all right as to his conduct by his mother's declaration that he had not been guilty of striking, put on, to the life, an air of injured innocence. Mr. Bray did not speak once during the meal, but sat in silence, with a heavily clouded brow.

For that evening the accustomed pleasant talks, cheerful smiling faces, and merry laughter were banished from the home of Mr. Henry Bray. A single moment of anger had done this unhappy work. It was something better at the family re-union the next morning. Sleep had wrought its usual work of restoring the mind to its better states, and calming its pulses to an even beat.

As Mr. Bray left his house something earlier than usual, and was walking along, with his eyes cast down, thinking over certain matters of business that would require his attention, a man came to his side, and, in a pleasant voice, said—

"Good morning, Mr. Bray!"

The merchant glanced up, with a heightening color into the face of this person who had overtaken him in his rather deliberate walk. He knew the voice. It was that of Mr. Carlton.

"Good morning." The response was not hearty How could it be?

"I was sorry to trouble you, yesterday," said Mr. Carlton, speaking in a frank, cheerful way. "But a friend, to whom I had loaned a sum of money, disappointed me at the last moment, and I was compelled to borrow at an unseasonable hour. Your kind effort to serve me was none the less appreciated because I had no need for the check when you were so obliging as to send it in. Mr. Agnew had already supplied my trifling deficiency."

Now, what answer could Mr. Bray make to this? Was Mr. Carlton actually in earnest? Was he really so dull as not to have appreciated his rough, insulting message of the day before. Or, was this courteous acknowledgment of an almost extorted favor a rebuking piece of irony?

"It would have gratified me if you had used the check," replied Mr. Bray—his voice a little below its usual firmness of tone. "It was tendered in all sincerity."

"I never doubted that for an instant," said Mr. Carlton, as if surprised that his neighbor should intimate, even remotely, a question of his right appreciation of the favor. Mr. Bray's reputation as a courteous, gentlemanly merchant, and a kind-hearted man, forbid any other inference."

Now this, Mr. Bray felt, was crowding him a little too hard; and he was considerably annoyed. "Tell Mr. Carlton that I neither borrow nor lend." Could he forget that rough answer to his neighbor's request for a couple of hundred dollars, at a late hour in the day, when his bank account was still short? No. He could not forget it; and that neighbor's compliments upon his mercantile and manly virtue, sounded too much like covert rebuke to be in the smallest measure agreeable. So he changed the subject, by referring to some general topic, and managed to appear interested, until, their ways diverging, they parted with courteous forms of speech.

"I don't like that," said Mr. Bray to himself, as he walked on alone. "All this is mere hypocritical assumption; and, under the circumstances, I can scarcely regard it as less than insulting; and if he talks again to me after this fashion, I will tell him so."

The opportunity soon occurred. It was, perhaps, about twelve, when the merchant saw Mr. Carlton enter his store, and come back to where he was sitting at his desk. There was a familiar smile upon his countenance, and he looked altogether self-possessed.

"Good morning again," said he, with much apparent frankness of manner.

"Good morning." Mr. Bray tried to look pleasant, and tried to assume a perfectly composed exterior; but the elements of excitement were moving within him. There was always a point beyond which self-control was impossible, and he felt that Mr. Carlton was pressing him beyond that point. In his uncourteous refusal to lend him two hundred dollars, he had done wrong; but to the best of his ability, he had endeavored to repair that wrong, and Mr. Carlton should have accepted his tender of repentance, and not insulted him by throwing Mr. Agnew in his face along with his rejected loan. Mr. Agnew! Known throughout the trade as one of the most uncourteous and disobliging of men! In that act he had given a sufficient rebuke; and there, in Mr. Bray's opinion, he should be willing to let the matter rest.

But it seemed that Mr. Carlton felt differently, as he had shown in his ironical reference to the matter at their meeting on the street; and it was plain to Mr. Bray, from the manner of his neighbor, that he had come to annoy him again with some reference to a circumstance that he desired to forget as quickly as possible. He was not altogether mistaken. Following the "good morning again," of Mr. Carlton, succeeded this sentence, as spoken with all the cheerful frankness of a man in earnest.

"Your kindness yesterday, makes me a little presuming to-day. I will take that check now, if you have it to spare. My friend has disappointed me again, and I have several payments to make."

The smile had faded from Mr. Carlton's face, ere this sentence was finished, for, instead of meeting a countenance of kind compliance—stern, almost flashing eyes looked steadily to his, and compressed lips gave warning of a refusal.

"There has been enough of this already!" said Mr. Bray, with repressed excitement.

"Enough of what?" Mr. Carlton looked surprised.

"Enough of insulting reference to my act of yesterday!" answered Mr. Bray.

"Insulting! What do you mean?" And Mr. Carlton drew himself up, and looked quite as indignant as his neighbor.

"My words are very plain. You understand the King's English, I presume?"

"I had supposed so. But yours is a dialect with which I am not familiar, and I must beg you to supply the glossary."

"Let me do that," said the clerk of Mr. Bray, stepping forward at this juncture.

"Do so, if you please, and I will be a thousand times obliged." And Mr. Carlton moved back a pace or two, awaiting the clerk's explanation.

"Permit me?" The clerk looked at Mr. Bray.

"Say on, Thomas," was answered.

"When Mr. Carlton sent in for the two hundred dollars yesterday, you were annoyed about something, and returned rather an uncourteous refusal—one altogether so unlike yourself, that I could not do you the injustice of letting it pass to our neighbor unqualified. So I softened the refusal, to make it sound as much like a regret for not complying as I possibly could. I knew that you would think and feel differently in a few moments, and I was not mistaken, as the offered check proved. That is the glossary, Mr. Carlton, which you asked, and I trust that it will make all clear. Did I do right, or wrong, Mr. Bray?" The young man turned, with a half-timid look, to his rather passionate employer, whose words were of so uncertain a character that it was hard to calculate the direction of their impulse. A moment of silence passed, and then Mr. Bray said, with feeling—

"Right, Thomas, right! And I thank you for such judicious conduct."

The young man bowed, and retired to wait upon a customer.

For a little while the two men stood looking at each other, each so impressed with a sense of the ludicrous, that the muscles of risibility were all in play.

"You have the glossary," said Mr. Bray, at length, a broad smile covering his face.

"Giving the clearest meaning to your words, a moment ago, so full of mystery," was answered, with as broad a smile in return.

"You wont refuse my check, I presume," and Mr. Bray turned to his desk.

"Just try me," said Mr. Carlton, in a voice that left no doubt of his meaning.

"Will two hundred be sufficient?"

"You can make it three, if you are over to-day."

"Three hundred it is, Mr. Carlton," said the merchant, the thermometer of whose feelings had risen from zero to summer heat," and whenever I can accommodate you in matters of this kind, don't fail to command me. If, as it may happen sometimes, I should be a little unamiable, my clerk there will act as a cushion, and prevent you feeling the shock of my temporary ill-nature. I didn't know, before, that I had so discreet an assistant."

There was a warmer atmosphere in the home of Mr. Bray, on the evening that succeeded this rather clouded morning, that on the one which preceded when the shadow of a single angry moment was large and dense enough to cover the whole household with a leaden pall. Little curly-head leaped into her father's arms almost upon the instant of his return, and hugged him with all the outgushing love of her innocent heart; and Eddy and Willy, the trouble of the past evening forgotten, were ready for their game of romps, and enjoyed it to their heart's content. The mother, too, was smiling and happy. That evening was marked as one of the green places in their home-life; and, but for the impulsive act of a single angry moment, the previous evening would have left with every heart as sweet a remembrance.

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A COUPLE OF HEROES.

The Delft, one of the Dutch ships taken at the battle of Camperdown, was in so shattered a state that after the greatest exertions for five days to keep her from sinking, all hope of saving her was given up. The English prize officer called aside Mr. Hieberg, who had been first lieutenant of the Delft, and who remained on board along with a number of the sick and wounded prisoners, who were not in condition to be removed, and represented that it was impossible to save all; that he intended at a certain signal to throw himself, with his men, into the long boat; and he invited Hieberg to avail himself of the opportunity to effect his escape. "What!" exclaimed Hieberg, "and leave these unfortunate men? (pointing to his wounded countrymen, whom it had been necessary to bring on deck, as the hold was already full of water.) No: no: go, and leave us to perish together." The English officer, affected by the generosity of Hieberg's answer, replied, "God bless you, my brave fellow; here is my hand: I give you my word, I will stay with you." He then caused his own men to leave the ship, and remained himself behind to assist the Dutch. The Russel soon sent her boats to their succour, which brought off as many as could leap on board them. The boats lost no time in making a second voyage with equal success. The Delft was now cleared of all but Hieberg and the English officer, with three subaltern Dutch officers, and about thirty seamen, most of them so ill from their wounds as to be unable to move. While still cherishing the hope that the boats would come a third time to their assistance, the fatal moment arrived, and on a sudden the Delft went down. The English officer sprang into the sea, and swam to his own ship; but the unfortunate Hieberg perished, the victim of his courage and humanity.

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A RUSSIAN DODGE.

A traveller in Persia writes:—We took a walk along the banks of the river Mongodeh, where, in fine weather, the inhabitants are found promenading. I observed a man bringing a horse to water, accompanied by a wild pig tamed. This was the first I had seen in the east; and from the abhorrence in which this animal is held by all orthodox Musselmen, I felt curious to know why any one should have taken the trouble to domesticate one. I learned, however, that the natives have an idea that if one be kept in a stable, any harm that might otherwise happen to the horses would be sure to fall on the pig. I was afterwards told by Persians that the late Russian consul here believed implicitly in this superstition, and moreover, that but for this preservation, he would have been very unlucky in his stables, as the pigs with which he was supplied by the peasants for the safety of his horses, were continually disappearing in a most mysterious manner. The majority of the natives shook their heads, and ascribed it to the malignity of the gods; but a few, less superstitious, had the ill nature to insinuate that the consul was fond of pork!

CHARITY.

BY ALICE CARY.

Sweetly we live, my wife and I,
Sweetly, all the time,
As a May rose in her house of leaves,
Or a poet in his rhyme.

Oft in her pale and quiet cheeks
A dash of red doth show
Her heart is fluttering like a wheel
In the wave of love below.

I call my good wife Charity,
And she blushes at the name,
Though she gave the light of her hair and eyes
To our baby, when it came.

Sweetly we live—her gentle brows
Know not the way to frown,
And I never see that her head is grey,
And her shoulders stooping down.

FOREST SKETCHES—NO. 27.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY COL. WALTER F. DUNLAP.

ATTACKED BY LEOPARDS.

"Hold on," said Uncle Abner, after we had taken our old seats upon the verandah; "don't ask any questions. I'm ready for ye."

"I told ye I was unable for a week to raise my rifle to my shoulder steady enough for a true aim; but I got over it after awhile, and then started. I had always supposed the native Nubians a miserable, dishonest set; full of all sorts of wickedness and vice. But I must say that I found the inhabitants of Demar a kind and obliging set. They were dirty; and I can't say much for their cooking. It seemed that the woman with whom I stopped had got some wheat from the coast, but the only bread I saw in any of the other huts was made of a kind of small round seed, something like millet. They call it *doca*. At other places I heard it called *seff*. Their huts were built of mud, held together by having small reeds mixed with it, while the roof was wholly of reeds. Their dress was about as simple as could be. My friend, the chief, whose name I have forgotten, wore a blue cotton vest, without sleeves, from which depended a short shirt reaching to the knees. The rest of the people, women and all, simply wore a piece of cotton cloth wound around the body, and secured under the right arm by strings. I never saw one of them with head, arms, legs, or feet covered.

"It was early in the morning when we set out—myself and two guides—and we meant to have reached a settlement called Monga, which was some sixty miles distant. But the day was excessively warm, and we were obliged to travel more slowly than we anticipated. And then we found in many places the sand so soft that our horses had hard work to travel through it. Sometimes they would sink in to the fetlocks at every step for some time, and, of course, this soon fatigued them. The sand had been moved by the high winds, and seemed to have considerable soft dirt with it.

"When night came we found ourselves upon an oasis, by the edge of a great mass of jagged rocks. These rocks were not in the form of a mountain, but appeared rather as though a huge mountain had been broken in pieces from base to summit, and spread over the desert. The oasis was small—not over half an acre—and the spring which watered it burst forth from the rocks. It wound along across the verdant spot in a small brook, and then lost itself in the sand, being entirely absorbed from sight at the distance of a dozen yards.

"Near the centre of this oasis grew a clump of trees, and beneath these we resolved to pass the night. Abdac assured me that Monga was all of five-and-twenty miles distant, so of course we had no thought of reaching that place. We secured the horses so that they could crop the grass, and then got out our supper of doca-bread and goats' butter. After this, we chatted awhile, then spread our blankets and lay down.

"I was very much fatigued, for the effects of my pleasant little episode at the gazelle hunt had not wholly worn off, so I looked to the priming of my pistols, placed my rifle by my side, ready for use, and then closed my eyes. I fell asleep almost immediately; for my two companions were chatting when I lay down, and I certainly heard nothing they said after my eyes were fairly shut.

"When I awoke it was from being startled by a wild neighing of the horses. I caught my rifle and started to my feet, and found that Abdac and Mada had done the same. But we could see nothing, nor could we hear anything. As soon as the horses saw us up they stopped their noise, and remained quiet. We listened for some time, but all was still. The moon had gone down, and the stars were bright. I looked at my watch and found it to be half-past two. We finally concluded that the horses had been startled by something that was passing to windward; and feeling assured that there was no present danger, we lay down again.

"When I next awoke it was broad daylight, and the horses were in wild commotion—leaping and rearing, and neighing loudly. I knew there must be something in the wind, and I asked Abdac what he supposed it could be. The thought of a lion was the first that presented itself to me. But we soon discovered the cause of the trouble. I had just approached my horse for the purpose of quieting him, when a movement to the right attracted my attention. I turned just in time to see an object upon the top of a high rock not over six yards distant. I saw a motion—quick and nervous—and on the next instant, ere I could fairly make out even the form of the object, it left the rock and alighted upon the back of Mada's horse.

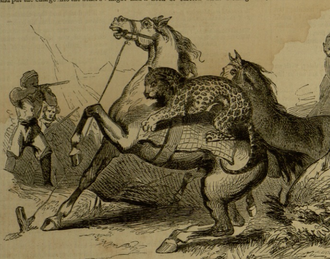
"It was a large *leopard!* I was in the act of raising my rifle when the report of Abdac's musket broke upon the air. I started back, for the flash of the discharge was close to my face. The musket had been loaded with buckshot, as Abdac was not much of a marksman, and hence wanted several chances for a hit.

"But his shot had done no further execution than to wound the leopard upon the back, though this may have been the means of saving the horse a severe wound, for it startled the beast, and caused him to hesitate. I noticed his movement, and by the time the smoke of the musket had swept away, I took deliberate aim at the leopard's head, and brought him down. He lay kicking upon the grass a few seconds, and then gave up the ghost.

"I had started towards the fallen beast when there came a sort of flash across my eyes, and as I instinctively started back I saw a second leopard alight upon the back of Mada's horse, he being nearest to the rock. This time Mada, in a fit of rage—for he seemed to have little fear of the wild animal, especially under the provocation of seeing his horse a second time attacked—discharged his musket. The leopard leaped from the horse—or fell—and rolled over; but he was not disabled, for in a moment more he retreated to the foot of the rock, where he turned his head over his shoulder and uttered a loud cry, half way between a roar and a yell; and then he turned upon Mada and spit and snarled right savagely.

"'D'ye see the leopard look over his shoulder?' asked Abdac. Says I, 'Yes.' 'There's more of 'em behind,' he cried, ramming down the wad atop of his buckshot.

"And he was right. The words were hardly from his mouth when four more leopards came leaping over the rocks—one upon Abdac's horse; one upon mine; and the other two upon the ground. I primed my rifle after they came. Quick as thought Abdac fired upon the fellow that had mounted his horse. He had sprung to within ten feet of his mark, and put the charge into the beast's head, rolling him over upon the sand. The report of his musket was yet upon the air when I fired at the fellow upon my horse. I was not over five yards from him, and of course he bit the dust.



"There were now three of the leopards left, one of them having received the charge of Mada's musket. They acted curiously. They neither fled nor made an attack. They seemed to realize that three of their kind had been killed, and had perhaps moved off to consider upon the subject. The one which had been wounded finally made a spring for Mada; but the Arab had been watching him, and was prepared. With a dexterity such as I could never have learned to imitate, he dropped upon his left knee, at the same time bringing his left elbow up under the beast's lower jaw. The sharp claws were spread, but ere they could be brought upon his shoulder he had plunged his sharp knife to the hilt in the leopard's breast, striking him just below the breast-bone, and sending the long blade home to the heart.

"The thing was done in an instant—done so quickly that I could hardly distinguish the movements. I saw the leopard leap—I saw Mada drop upon his knee—I saw the left hand brought under the arm-pit, and the elbow raised—I saw the ugly head fly up—and I saw the glitter of the blade as it flashed through the air. The brave fellow threw the bleeding beast over upon its back, and then leaped to his feet. He looked wild and mad. His eyes glared, and his knife was clutched with a determinate vengeance.

"Up to this moment the two remaining leopards had not moved from their places by the rock. They had stood there, with their backs up; the hair standing in a ridge; their faces drawn into an angry scowl; the lips raised; the white teeth exposed; the long tails lashing their spotted sides; and the sharp claws spread upon the grass. As Mada leaped to his feet they drew back against the rock, and then sprang—one upon me and the other upon Abdac.

"I had expected this, and was prepared for it. My pistols were the common heavy boarding weapons, and I had held them in my hands for some moments, not daring to attempt to reload my rifle. As my enemy came on I stepped upon one side, and he passed me. I had supposed he would immediately turn and renew the attack; and I was not mistaken. I had feared to fire while he was upon the leap, for a miss might have proved fatal to me; but, as I had calculated, when he found he had passed me, he immediately faced about for a short spring. But I anticipated his movement. Instead of allowing him to make the spring I darted towards him and made a motion with my pistol as though I would shove it against his head. He grasped the muzzle between his teeth.

"You may imagine that at that moment the thought of my pistol's missing fire was particularly unpleasant. Should it do so the beast might fasten his claws into my flesh ere I could bring the other weapon into use. I had no fear of being killed outright by the leopard, for somehow I felt a confidence in my ability to overcome him, but such a set of wounds as those claws would give, under the burning sun of those deserts, would be almost sure to prove fatal.

"But my lucky star was up. As I drew the trigger there was a dull report in the beast's throat; his jaws flew open; a quick howl of pain followed, and then he leaped back and plunged his snout into the grass, his howl changing into a sharp cry which was kept up until the contents of my other pistol had been sent through his eye into his brain.

"In the meantime Mada and Abdac had slain the other one. He had sprung upon the latter, but Mada had seen it in time to leap forward and knock him down with the butt of his musket, and then with their knives they had despatched him without a wound to themselves.

"I could hardly realise the work we had done. Six good-sized leopards lay dead upon the ground about us. Many a time have I passed over this adventure, in giving an account of my visit to the Nile, because I feared I should not be believed. It seems almost incredible, and yet it is simple enough, too, to one who can understand it. Had we three men been alone, and been attacked by the leopards, we should not have come off so easily; but the attack was made upon the horses, and when Abdac had explained to me the thing as he understood it, I found it all very simple and easily accounted for. The matter was thus:

"Most of those who traveled that desert were natives, and the horses were trained to remain by their masters without being secured; or, if they were secured, it was generally so slightly that the horse could break away very easily, the fastening being only as a sort of check. When the leopard attacks such a party, he singles out his horse and makes the leap: and the affrighted animal feeling the sharp claws in his back, darts off over the desert. This is what the leopard has wished. As the horse goes he clings to his place, works his head down over the shoulder, and finally closes his teeth upon the throat!

"The poor horse may now rear, and plunge, and kick as he pleases; but he cannot shake off the demon! The cruel claws are buried deeply beneath the tough skin, and the sharp fangs closed upon the throat. The evil presence holds to its place like a leech, and like a leech it gluts itself with blood. Away the poor horse flies—now whirling madly upon his hind legs—now rearing aloft—then shaking his frame with all his power—and then away again. But the agony cannot be removed—the pain cannot be lessened, until fainting nature lessens the power to suffer. By and by the horse grows weak and worn—a few more bounds and he must stop. He staggers a moment, casts one faint look upward, and then sinks to rise no more!

"The leopard now finishes its meal more easily, and perhaps has company to help him at his repast. In an hour more the traveler that way might find a flock of carrion birds picking the bones of what was a noble, generous creature only a short time before!

"It is thus leopards plan that attack encampments upon the desert. They never attack man, unless in self-defence, or upon the most urgent necessity. They single out the horses, intending to ride them away. And it was thus the beasts intended to do which attacked us. But they missed their mark. Probably they had attacked parties before, and had been successful in getting off the horses; but when they found our horses fast, their calculations were all knocked in the head. The four who last jumped from the rock had probably planned it thus: The two that leaped upon the horses were to have ridden them away, while the other two followed in pursuit, ready for the meal when the horses should be brought down. Hence the latter two remained by the rock as they did. They wanted our animals, but did not want us. The sight of their companion's being thrown over by Mada, probably excited their vengeance, so they made the final attack.

"We took off the skins and spread them behind us upon our horse's rumps when we were ready to start. My horse had several scratches upon the back, but nothing to hurt. Abdac's animal had fared a little harder, but still he was not dangerously wounded. Mada's horse was not even scratched, there having been two large leathern water-bags upon his back, which kept the sharp claws from his skin.

"We washed the wounds with water, kept them clean and unchafed; and they healed up very soon. We reached Monga in time for dinner, and there astonished the natives by the sight of our six fresh leopard-skins."

"E PLURIBUS UNUM."

Don't be frightened, reader! We are not about to preach a homily on patriotism. We are content to leave that to the political papers, whose editors, when they have some selfish, partizan scheme in view, are sure to laud "the Constitution and the Union," in the sincerest spirit of this national motto, (seemingly,) that their motives may be veiled, if possible, from public detection—wherein they imitate Mahomet, as nearly as they can, in wiliness, for he literally threw dust into the air when going into battle. The effect was, of course, to blind the eyes of his followers. Said politicians do this figuratively.

No, we have a different aim. This is to illustrate, with a word or two, the beautiful *spirit* of "E Pluribus Unum." As expressing the act which formed one great State from a number of separate ones—literally, "*from many one*"—it is certainly as beautifully expressive, sentimentally, as it was practically befitting the occasion of its memorable adoption. We Americans have abbreviated this Latin motto in the single word, "Union"—and who will say that there is not something inspiring in its very sound!

But there are other relations in which "E Pluribus Unum" should be found animating to duty. The marriage "union" is one of these. When its sphere is widened by growth into the family union, and many become one in interests, how full of practical significance becomes our motto! What sight could be more beautiful than a family where Harmony reigns, and Discord never finds a home?—where the wishes of husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, are all the same? Surely none which earth can afford.

Let the spirit of "E Pluribus Unum" prevail in *all* the other relations of life, and soon shall real foretastes of Heaven be ours!

MAD DOGS.

Within three weeks, five persons have been bitten by mad dogs, in this vicinity, two of the sufferers being men, one a woman, and two of them children. And yet the season has but just begun. Dogs are now comparatively tame to what they will be in a few weeks. The influence of the dog-star has not yet been felt, and when it shall begin to rage, dogs which are now the meekest of their race will develope into the maddest of creatures, and inflict the most terrible death known to man upon all who shall be so hapless as to fall in their way. Let the dogs, therefore, be taken care of. All the members of the canine race in the city are not worth one human life.

A NEW AND IMPROVED PLAN.

The Superintendent of Streets, anxious to work a reform in the cleaning of the streets, has determined, according to the Picayune, upon employing a number of men with tea-spoons, who will take up a spoonful of dirt and walk with it to the North River, throw out the dirt, and then come back for another load. This we must say is an improvement that ought to have been made long ago—for certainly the dirt can be more rapidly taken away with these spoons than with the absurd little carts now in use.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Disputant.—You will have to present the young ladies with the promised gifts, for you are mistaken in supposing that the members of the British Cabinet get no salaries. You should be careful how you dispute such a point with a bright girl who has lived in London several seasons, and been on terms of intimacy with the family of the American Ambassador. The Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the three Secretaries of State (Home, Foreign and Colonial), have each a salary of $25,000 a year. The Secretary at War has $12,400; the First Lord of the Admiralty $22,500; and the President of the Board of Control $17,500. Members of Parliament, however, get neither a salary nor mileage. Our members of Congress now get $3,000 a year each, beside their accustomed mileage.

Theologian.—Yes. It is possible for two exceedingly intelligent men honestly to entertain diametrically opposite views not only on the same question of *belief*, but on the same question of *fact*; and it is equally true that some narrow-minded and selfish people cannot by any possibility be made to consider more than one side of any question, in the decision of which they are personally interested.

Mechanic.—You are mistaken. *Duties* and *taxes* are very different things. Duties are money which is paid in certain proportions on foreign goods that are brought into this country: taxes are money paid by persons according to the value of their real estate and personal property.

Esther.—Olive oil is made from the fruit of the olive when ripe.

A Mother, Fourteenth street.—It is difficult, if not impossible to lay down a rule for the education of children which will at the same time be so pointed as to be of practical utility and so general in its application as to comprise everybody's offspring and the multifarious circumstances which surround them. To say, as some of your friends do, that no child should be taught to read until after the age of seven years is ridiculous; and it is equally absurd, on the other hand, to maintain that *every* child should be able to read fluently before it is five years old. Parents should understand the physical and mental characteristics and capacities of their children well enough to treat each of them according to its own nature. It would be better that some children should not be taught even their letters before the age of seven years, while others at that age might beneficially be working their way through "Easy Lessons in Greek and Latin." Educate your children, then, according to their natures and capacities.

Desponding Father.—Since you have found that flogging, imprisonment in his room, and all manner of severity, will not make your son an obedient and loving boy, suppose you now try patience, love, forbearance and sympathy tempered by firmness and justice, and see what the result will be. Without fervent love on the part of the parent, and the most benignant and penetrating sympathy with his children's wants and griefs, it is impossible for him to bring them up properly. If he lacks these essential requisites of a father, his offspring *will not be obedient and loving children*, no matter how much he frets and scolds at and beats them. He may be able to flog them into the suppression of their disobedient and rebellious emotions while in his presence, and thus establish a degree of superficial and mechanical discipline; but, *in their hearts* children, like the rest of us, will only obey those whom they love, and will only love such as are to them loving and lovely.

Leon.—Your story is as old as the first pair of human hearts, but your sufferings are doubtless just as acute as though you were the original jilted one. The only cure for your grief is to be found in incessant occupation, and in praying for the happiness of the woman who has so grievously wounded your heart, and your relief would be still more rapid and lasting should you include in your blessings the successful rival who is now her husband. No happiness is ever won by vengeance or found in the gloomy caves of despair. You must forgive those who have wronged you and unflinchingly do your duty, if you would find a lasting solace to your griefs.

School-Mistress.—You are mistaken in supposing that "definition" and "description" *mean exactly the same thing*. Would you say "the *definition* of a landscape, and the *description* of a rule?" or, the *description* of a landscape, and the *definition* of a rule? We are quite certain that you would prefer the latter, and tell a pupil that the former is incorrect, even though you had to do what your incomparable sex so much dislike, namely: *abandon your argument*. In many instances, however, "definition" and "description" are nearly synonymous, and in some cases completely so.

J. M. G.—We cannot "give you the exact reason why property is now so much lower in some parts of Brooklyn than it was three years ago." One reason for the present depression of property in "some parts of Brooklyn," may be found in the fact that so much money has been drawn off to the West for purposes of speculation; another, that many parties have erected blocks of dwellings on credit, and not being able to pay, will sell out for whatever they can get, sooner than lose everything by the foreclosure of mortgages.

A Girl of Eighteen says she has three lovers whom she regards with equal affection, and who have all besought and are beseeching her hand in marriage. One is rich, old and ugly, another is rich, young, handsome and dissipated; and the third is a poor, handsome, noble hearted and industrious young man. The question is, which shall she marry? She had better wait until her own heart and judgment tell her which to choose. It is evident that at present she does not love any of them.

E.—It would hardly be proper for a young lady to volunteer to have her daguerreotype taken for a young man with whom she and her family are not on terms of intimacy. Such little acts of friendship and courtesy are governed, or at least *should* be governed by certain subtle indications and experiences among friends which are palpable to and well understood by them, but which cannot be rendered appreciable to those who are without the charmed circle.

Orion.—It is a good plan for a young man to join a military company if the members of it are of the right disposition and habits. The exercises of the drill-room and parade ground are conducive to physical health, and if the moral atmosphere of the same is of the right tone the balance of the influence would certainly be on the right side. The same remarks will serve as an answer to your inquiry in relation to joining a fire company.

Inquirer.—We think that the practice of flogging soldiers and sailors is utterly abominable and barbarous, and should be abandoned by every civilized nation. The experience of the whole world shows that a low degree of discipline exists with a high degree of flogging—a circumstance which proves that the discipline which depends upon the fear of the lash is precarious, little to be trusted, and will not withstand the test of temptation.

Female Clerk.—We think that a girl who acts as saleswoman in a retail store can easily avoid insult and impertinence on the part of impudent young men, by always maintaining a dignified deportment. The most brazen faced snob will find himself at fault in the presence of a maiden of invincible innocence and dignity. A silly, prattling girl, on the other hand, seems to invite impertinent attentions from equally silly men.

Miss M. E. W.—No one is expected to follow a writing-master's rules for the formation of letters in the correspondence of active life, or the exchange of friendly billet-doux. It is a good plan, however, for ladies, as well as gentlemen, to aim at uniformity and style in penmanship, and to acquire freedom in the use of all the little ornaments and elegancies of the art. To be able to write a beautiful and stylish hand, is no mean accomplishment even for a lady.

Domestic.—You are clearly in the wrong. It is better *never* to get out of temper with your family. A man cannot, of course, always maintain an angelic frame of mind; but if he must show ill-temper let him exhibit it and expend it anywhere sooner than at home. To get angry at and scold a wife or child is a *cowardly* act, as well as a brutal one. "Take somebody of your size."

West Point.—The battle of Wagram was fought opposite Vienna on the sixth of July 1809. The French were commanded by Napoleon in person, the Austrians by the Arch-Duke Charles.

Apprentice.—Sixteen hours a day is too much for a boy (or man) to work at hard labor. Your master has no business to overtask you.

Kalend.—No. Queen Victoria does not sign the death-warrants of criminals condemned to be executed. The Judge who tries the criminal commands his execution by merely signing the calendar; in the margin of which, and opposite to the criminal's name, he also states the nature of the sentence and how it is to be carried out: this calendar is left with the Sheriff as his warrant and authority; and if the Sheriff does not afterwards receive a special order to the contrary, he executes the sentence of the law. In London, however, the course as to the execution of criminals, was, previously to 7th William IV., and 1st Victoria, cap. 77, that the Recorder reported to the King in person the several cases of crime, and if he received the royal pleasure "that the law must take its course," he issued his warrant to the Sheriff, directing him to do execution at a specific time and place. But such a course was abolished by the above statute on the accession to the throne of her present Majesty. So that now all criminals are executed without her sanction or warrant. This, however, does not take away or interfere with the royal and amiable prerogative of pardoning, which her Majesty may graciously exercise in favor of any criminal (except those condemned by parliamentary impeachment) by a pardon under her Sign Manual. It would be a terrible trial to a woman, were she compelled to sign the death-warrants of all the criminals executed in Great Britain; and no doubt many a condemned one would be pardoned were the feelings of Victoria thus directly brought into play.

Traveller.—You are unquestionably right in regard to the disagreeableness of the crying of infants in railroad cars and stage-coaches; but you are as unquestionably wrong in your theory as to what should be the conduct of the passengers on such occasions. The crying of an infant is more distressing to its mother than to any one else, and she should be pitied for her suffering, rather than condemned for a matter over which she has no control. And, to come at once to the point, it is a most brutal thing for a man to fret and scold about an infant's crying in public, or for him to manifest displeasure even in his looks, so that the mother shall be made aware of his feelings. Instead of acting in such a vulgar manner, he should strive to set the mother as much as possible at her ease by exhibiting a cheerful countenance and sympathizing spirit.

A Doubting Mind.—No ill effects could result to you from your uniting with some religious society with which you sympathize, but probably much good would come of such a step. A really honest and good man always feels better and more contented when he is fairly and squarely placed before the community and in nothing is this explicitness more desirable than in matters appertaining to one's eternal welfare. When a man unites with a religious society, it is equivalent to the unfurling of his banner upon the breeze; it *places* him; it stamps his quality, his friends know where to find him; and of course he feels more comfortable—he is quieted in his feelings and self-possessed in his spirit.

W. G.—Let your little daughter write and "draw pictures" as much as she pleases, and encourage her in doing so. Her teacher is right in regard to such matters. Children should not be taught to consider it a misdemeanor to "make pictures" on their slates, or elsewhere. They should have a certain portion of their time allotted to them in which to enjoy the making of pictures under the superintendance of a competent instructor, that their taste for drawing may be deepened and cultivated and their talent for it developed. There are few branches of education which are of more importance than this, or from the pursuit and practice of which more healthy enjoyment can be secured.

A Young Beau.—You did not do *wrong* in crying out when the young lady rocked on your toe, but it would have been much better had you possessed sufficient fortitude to bear the pain in silence. To throw a whole assembly into confusion by a sudden outcry, and render an innocent young lady unhappy for an entire evening, are no slight offences, and a man who cannot bear a slight or severe squeezing of his toes without yelling as though a Tuscarora were scalping him had better keep his toes at home. Perhaps you might overcome your "sensitiveness to physical pain" by accustoming yourself to it by degrees.

A Distressed Wife.—You have an undoubted right to write to Queen Victoria, and tell her all your troubles, and state to her your necessities, but such a course would avail you nothing. She would never read your letter, or if she should by any chance do so, she would pay no attention to it. The incumbents of eminent stations are so flooded with such communications, that they have to adopt the comprehensive and convenient rule of giving them all the go bye. Your case is a distressing one, but nearly everybody is, in some way or other as miserable as yourself.

A Poor Father.—Your case, if it be as you have stated it, is indeed a hard one. We sincerely compassionate your condition, but we do not think your plan of extrication such as a parent should propose. You should stand by your children at all hazards, and not let them be transplanted into other families unless it be absolutely necessary; and then you should be certain that those to whom you commit their welfare are worthy of the great trust. In the meanwhile, do not mind what your censorious relatives and neighbors say, and be careful how you yield to their advice.

A Young Husband.—You are clearly in the wrong. A man should never scold or fret at his wife—and to do so before others is an outrageous aggravation of the offence. Young husbands with weak heads are too apt to wish to play the role of commander-in-chief, and such are always certain to mistake tyranny for firmness, and brutality for dignity. Wives should be careful, on the other hand, not to give their husbands too frequent opportunity for the exhibition of those characteristics which are most odious in man.

The Man in Gray.—We are not astonished that you should think that a sentence of ten years to the penitentiary rather severe on a pickpocket, but we consider it eminently a just one. We have no sympathy whatever with professional villains, who reduce crime to a system and pursue it in cold blood. As for your plea that perhaps they cannot help being villains, it goes for nothing. Are we any the more merciful to a deadly reptile because it cannot help being what it is?

A Helpless Widow.—Your loss of the three hundred dollars is owing to your omission of making a clear and definite bargain in writing. In pecuniary transactions, even with your most intimate friends, you should not leave anything to be "understood," for it will certainly be *misunderstood*; and whatever is settled by the understanding that "it will be all right" will be sure to be all wrong. Put everything down in black and white if you would save trouble.

An Ambitious Vocalist.—No, you had better do almost anything else than seek to earn your living on the operatic stage. What your friends say about your becoming the leading prima donna of the age is all absurd nonsense. According to your own statement, they are people who have had no opportunities of forming a correct judgment of such matters, and the truth probably is that you could never even rise to the rank of a third-rate dramatic vocalist.

A Despondent Lover.—You have no business to entertain such horrible suspicions of your sweetheart, unless you have good grounds for the same, and if you have good grounds for them you should at once give up all idea of marrying her. Should they be cleared up for the present, you could never completely exterminate them, and they might always be a source of unhappiness to you.

Black Eagle.—It is possible that a man with many good qualities may abuse his wife, and swear at her. Such a man, when his temper is not aroused, may be kind-hearted, loving and generous. There are all manner of inconsistencies among men, some of whom are the mere footballs of circumstance and passion.

Ximene.—It is impossible in a paragraph to give an analysis of love, or to explain the causes of it. If you want to understand it practically, just wait patiently until you experience the inexplicable and delicious emotion, and *then* you will know more about it than anybody can ever tell you. Love, like pain, must be felt to be appreciated.

Investigator.—We have never known of anybody whose opinion was of consequence, who denied Cromwell's ability as a soldier, a statesman, and a ruler. Read Macaulay's essay on Cromwell, if you would learn what he really was—or, better still, read Carlyle's biography of him, and Cromwell's letters.

Nero.—If you love the girl, why not tell her so at once, and thus settle the matter? If you have good reason to believe that the man you speak of is pursuing her with an evil design, you should (if you have the courage) take him in hand and at once crush out all chance of harm to the young lady.

Miss E G.—The passage—

Tramp! tramp! along the land they rode,
Splash! splash! along the sea;
The scourge is red, the spur drops blood—
The flashing pebbles flee—

occurs in Sir Walter Scott's ballad of "William and Helen."

Suspicion.—The passage to which you refer reads thus:—

"Suspicion haunts the guilty mind,
The thief doth fear each bush an officer."

It occurs in the last party of King Henry VI.

R. S. M.—Yes. We will send a dozen Ledgers to a dozen different addresses, for one year for $18, and give you an extra copy for your trouble in getting up the club.

Stephen Lovell.—The "Jessie" to whom our correspondent referred is altogether another "Jessie" than the one whom you mention.

E.—It is no sign that a person is indolent because he will not do certain kinds of work. He may be very industrious in other pursuits which are to his taste.

J. K. Wall st.—Such contributions as you propose are not adapted for the Ledger, and are therefore respectfully declined.

⁎ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*